ESSAYS AND PAPERS

1858—1919.

REVEREND MOTHER STUART.

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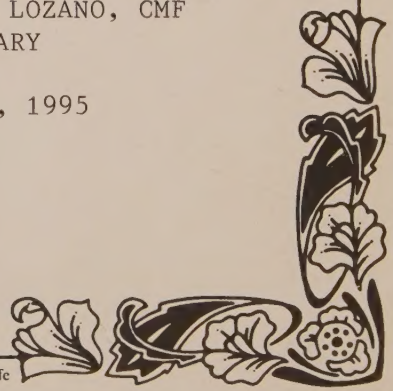

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ESSAYS AND PAPERS

1888—1910.

WITHDRAWN

BY

REVEREND MOTHER STUART.

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ROEHAMPTON.
1915.

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PREFACE.

THE Essays and Papers in this little Book were written by Reverend Mother Stuart for the Community at Roehampton, during the thirty years they had the happiness of possessing her.

For those who lived with her, and knew her, she will live again in these pages. They will hear the tone of her voice, and feel her spirit breathing in her words. Those who were not so privileged will learn to know her better, and will understand how great a treasure God lent to the whole Society for so short a time.

The Essays and Notes have been printed as she left them. The shorter papers in the second part of the book were in many cases the "Notes" which she developed as she spoke. All were the outcome of her thought and experience, the summing up of a few points of her teaching; they are full of local colouring, references and remarks, which, perhaps, only those for whom they were originally written can fully understand; but the great lessons are for all, and reveal her as she was, "so natural and so supernatural, so well-balanced in thought and judgment, so full of activity in every direction, so simple and childlike, so sweet-natured, so loving, so safely and strongly poised in faith, so intense in love, so trustful and joyous in hope," as has been beautifully and truly said of her by one who knew her.

1914.

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Part I.

ESSAYS.

THE SALMON, THE SOLE AND THE SHRIMP.

A salmon, a sole and a shrimp were left behind by the sea in a tidal pool. They had been taken unawares, for the tide had gone out unusually quickly. There was nothing for it but to wait, and the shrimp proposed a subject for discussion.

"Which of us three," he said, "is most fitted for perfection by our manner of life? I will not say which is most perfect, for that would be invidious, but which has most aptitudes for perfection?" The Salmon's tail gave a regal and almost supercilious flap as if the question were quite too one-sided to admit of any discussion. "I suppose," continued the shrimp, "that we may put the sole out of the question at once, its most marked aptitude is for going to the bottom and staying there, so it lies between you and me, you begin," and the shrimp sat up in an attitude of critical attention. "As to aptitudes for perfection," said the salmon, "there is no question, I have been looked on from time immemorial as one of the most distinguished fish, I may say, as *the* most perfect! Look at the virtues which characterize our family, we can adapt ourselves to almost any climate, and certainly to any circumstances in which salmon ought to be placed. The salt water of desolation strengthens us, and the fresh water of consolation revives us, but we are equally at home in both; I ask you if this is not the mark of a perfect fish?" The Shrimp's eyes

were starting out of their sockets: "I hold it more perfect," it answered, "to live all your life in the salt sea of desolation without even desiring the sweet waters of consolation, besides the Lobsters tell me they find them most enervating." "For lobsters," answered the salmon, "but we can adapt ourselves to both, the perfect fish does not even know whether he is in consolation or desolation. Then look at our courage, our perseverance. 'Give me a courageous soul, rather than a humble soul,' says St. Theresa, and every salmon agrees with her. I should like to see your style of perfection face to face with a difficulty such as we call a salmon leap; when the current of nature below is dragging you back, till your tail aches and your gills pant with the effort of making head way, and grace seems against you also, and instead of lifting and supporting you it only batters you down with tons of cold water; who but a salmon will hold its own then, and leap 10, 20, 30 times till it has cleared the falls and floats in the still waters above." "To be ignominously deluded by a bit of red wool on a hook," rejoined the shrimp, "to be taken captive by a thread of catgut, or escaping this, to have your blood sucked by that old otter called Pride, which is always on the look-out for your magnificent family and relations." "Great gifts mean great dangers," put in the sole quietly, "I know of no fish that has so many enemies as the salmon; sportsmen, poachers, otters in the rivers, and all the larger fish in the sea." "And none that is so open to their attacks," chimed in the shrimp, "so easily deluded, so systematically hunted down and killed.

Now my idea of perfection is something quite different —in fact indifference is my characteristic virtue and that of all our family. You see we carry our bones outside us, so that we can bear very rough handling, while all our best and tenderest qualities are within and make no show. But the main point is indifference. You must have heard of this in the Lobster family, which I look upon as my own. Under a great tenacity of purpose they preserve so complete an indifference that they shake the very limbs off their bodies without hesitation and without inconvenience. They may pride themselves on the size of a claw that has taken years to develop, but give them a motive and they part from it without even turning a feeler. Then they are so little attached to their residence that they change shells every year, bearing with unheard of fortitude the defenceless time which follows ; they are indifferent to employment, put a human finger or a piece of stick into their claws and they close upon it with equal determination and tenacity. In fact they, I should say *we*, make ourselves indifferent to all circumstances, we rise above them. Others !" . . . here the shrimp skipped three inches high in the water and was carried off by a prawn net that happened to pass by, so that its indifference was rudely tested, and its discourse remained unfinished.

"You have not spoken," said the salmon to the sole, "what have you to say for yourself?" "For myself, nothing," answered the sole, "but I will tell you what God has given me. I lie flat at the bottom of the sea because that is the best place for me. He has made me brown on the upper side that I might

look like what I am, nothing—and white like mother of pearl on the under-side, that I might never be stained by the sea floor tho' I lie so low upon it, and then He has put both my eyes on one side of my head so that I cannot look any way but straight up to Him." "Well," said the salmon, "I always said that was a humble sole, I am not sure that it is not better off than either of us for it takes the lowest place and the highest view after all."

And as the tide came in, it left the sole in possession of them.

1888

PRAECISA EST VELUT A TEXENTE MEA.

I was travelling on foot for my pleasure in a quiet easy way through a lonely part of England, and one evening while waiting for my supper to be prepared in the country inn, I strolled into the graveyard and amused myself by reading the inscriptions on the tombstones. It was one of those few happy West country villages that had lived through the stormy times of the Reformation without losing the old faith, so that over each grave you could see the cross in one form or another as of old, and below it the humble prayer for the dead: *Requiescat in pace.*

One tombstone however roused my curiosity. It was exceedingly ugly, in the very worst taste of the 18th century, but it was of white marble while all the others were of native sandstone, and I said to myself, "Here lies one, who even in death, would rise above

his fellows, or else one whose friends have wished to show their affection in the costliest way though not in the best taste." The inscription on the tomb was as follows:

IN MEMORY OF
ONESIMUS PERKINS—WEAVER
on whose soul sweet JESUS have mercy.
Erected in grateful memory
by
HIS PARISH PRIEST.

It bore the date of fifty years before. I was asking myself what Onesimus Perkins, the weaver, could have done to deserve a memorial of white marble in grateful remembrance from his Parish Priest—perhaps he had saved his life or that of someone dear to him, perhaps he had woven the altar-linen gratis. . . . .

Hearing a feeble cough behind me, I turned round and saw an old man in the ecclesiastical dress which had been abolished by the penal laws, but had never been laid aside in this happy Catholic village. He looked at least 80 years of age, and it flashed on me at once, as he drew slowly near the grave, that he was no doubt the same Parish Priest that had erected the monument, and was coming to pray by the side of the good weaver. Curiosity mastered every other feeling, and taking my hat in my hand I said, with some hesitation, "Reverend Father, may I ask the reason why Onesimus Perkins, the weaver, has deserved such a memorial from his Priest?" The good Priest looked over his spectacles, smiling as he closed his breviary and said: "Sir, it will give me great pleasure to tell you what Onesimus Perkins did for me—he rendered

me more services than any other man in my life, yet he never knew it." "If he never knew it, they did not cost him very dear, Reverend Father," I ventured to say. "They were none the less precious to me," was his answer, "but listen to my story."

"I have been Parish Priest here for fifty years and as you may easily conceive I had not much training to fit me for the post, barely enough learning to be ordained priest. I was sent here by the pressure of the times to have charge of souls, my head still full of camps and battlefields, for I had dreamt of war since my boyhood, and I may say I had little of the priest, except my sacred character.

Well, Onesimus Perkins, the weaver, came soon after my arrival and settled in a little cottage where I now live. My first interview was on the subject of tithes. I called at his house and was rapping impetuously at his door, unable to make him hear from the noise of his loom, when I saw Giles Sharp, a notorious poacher, with a ferret in his pocket, and a lurcher at his heels, sneak up to the back window of Perkins' house, and putting his head through he gave a sharp whistle and the loom stopped. "Perkins," said the poacher, "what has thee had for dinner to-day?" "Black bread" said the old weaver. "Who'd eat black bread when they can have a leveret, or a plump partridge for nothing" pursued Giles, "here make a net with thy clever fingers before sundown, meet me at the corner of the wood at moon-rise, and to-morrow thee'll have something better than black bread." "Giles," said Perkins' voice again, "I want none of thy leverets and plump partridges, I'm not living for

my dinner, man. I've a soul as well as a body; there, get thee to some honest work, Giles, and make thy peace with God, thou'll may be, not see the sun set twice again." The poacher turned away with a short laugh, but I stepped up to the window asking: "What made thee think of death, friend?" "My shuttle, Father," he answered, "the loom makes me think of many things, my shuttle flies so fast till the thread has all run out of the bobbins, and then I give one snap with the scissors, and it is all over just like death. I think every day it may be the last throw with my shuttle—it makes me very content with the little I have and very careful not to lose days fooling and sinning. You know, Father, once the shuttle has missed its throw the pattern's spoiled, and I'm trying to weave out my pattern right for Heaven."

It was very simple, Sir, but it opened my eyes to a great deal, and the first words that came into my mind were: "*Non in solo pane vivit homo.*" Before night I had stripped my little house of all but the bare necessaries of life, that no creature of sense might keep me back from my God.

Three years afterwards, the fever of emigration came upon my people. I was struck with it myself. I lived in a dream of the golden West for them and for me. We would go out and live a patriarchal life in the new country, with the gold and silver, the corn and the wine. I went to speak to the old weaver, but he shook his head. "No Father," said he, "the emigration agent came to see me and tempt me with his tales of the new country, the gold and silver, the corn and wine; God gives me a little time every day,

Father, it is like my loom, what is done is rolled up, and a little comes out as I want it, and the bit in front of me is rolled up still. I only see for to-day and I don't know what's coming to-morrow, I think the gold fields are most a dream, and I don't want to see beyond what God has given me to-day."

I thought it true and that I had been carried away by a dream of my imagination, while God wanted me to do my work as Priest in the present moment as best I could, praying and baptising and catechising and weeping over my sins. Now you see, Sir, how Onesimus was my friend.

So, when one of the great Socialist leaders came down and tried to set my people on fire, I sent him down to Onesimus, and he told me afterwards that the old man, instead of talking to him, had shown him how the loom worked, how the pattern was overhead and he never saw it, how it was drawn by a great artist and then thought out by an arithmetician, and then given to the common workman to carry out, saying to the voluble preacher of "social reform" and universal suffrage, that he thought there must always be one above the other, some to work and some to plan and think, and God the great Artist watching the web from above . . . . till the Reformer went away disgusted—but I saw what the old man meant, and learned a lesson of dependence.

Then when Onesimus was dying, I was troubled in my mind about the new-fangled philosophers who cut the ground from under our feet, till we don't know if there is a God at all. I went down to him and said: "Onesimus, dearest child, tell me before you go home,

what you think of God and the world to come, and if you feel you are stepping out into darkness, not knowing whither?" He turned to me and said: "Father hear me, a weaver works all his life at the wrong side of the web, it looks all wrong, no pattern at all, all disorder, only, when it is finished he can turn it round and see the beautiful design the Master was working out. So it is now. I am going to turn my web, and do you think, Father, that if I trusted the design of an artist, I am going to distrust what I always believed in. You know the learned reasons Father, but I can only say that my heart tells me that I am going to God."

So he died, and dying taught me to walk by faith, and to leave the design to the One who knows what He is doing, and not to want to see.

Now you see how I owe the graces of my life to this poor weaver.

The old Priest gave me his blessing and I asked for his prayers. I shall never forget the weaver's grave, for I found by degrees that the whole of my spiritual life was in that loom. The shuttle flying so quickly tells that now is my only moment to give to God; a moment lost—the threads cross again, the opportunity is gone, grace passes, and the pattern is spoiled.

Then again, the work is always in the present; what is past is rolled up not to be looked at again till the web is finished, what is before is also rolled up, not to be seen till the moment comes to work it, and so I live between two eternities in a present that is "*une sorte d'éternité pour moi.*"

And above all, I must learn to live by faith, like the weaver, never seeing the plan of my life, but trusting to God for it and working on the wrong side as it seems, but working for a reality, not of my reason or the imagination of my own fancies, but one, of which God has not only designed the whole, but counted each stitch and tied every change of thread, from the beginning to the end.

1889.

CANDIDUS CANTABIT MORIENS.

A Spiritual Fairy Story.

The stately Abbey of St. Gilbert in the Fens was well known to every Christian of Lincolnshire in the 12th century. Not so, perhaps, the story of what befell Brother Placid of that monastery in the year of our Lord 1160.

It fell out that during the singing of the conventual High Mass on one of the festivals in early Spring, Brother Placid was assailed by a temptation, and that, not for the first time. Brother Placid was regular in observance, fervent in prayer, punctual in choir, the first to rise for Matins, humble and obedient, patient under correction, diligent in reading, but Brother Placid could not sing, and hence came the oft-repeated temptation to discontent, when his brothers chanted the praises of God, and a few low husky notes were all that he could utter in the choir. And the beauty of this particular High Mass brought back the temptation in all its force. The boy monks in the choir were

flinging such wild free notes up into the vault's roof, the clear trebles rose so high one after the other : "*In gloria, in gloria, in gloria, Dei Patris,*" the graver voices of the elder monks swelled so richly in the great *Amen*—that while the others thanked God in the fervour of their devotion, Brother Placid bowed his head in his stall and wept for very discontent. No sooner was the High Mass over, than the young monk hastened to the cell of the Father Abbot to disclose his temptation and accuse himself of his fault. The Abbot received him kindly, pointed out to him his fault and his danger, and bid him walk in solitude, and by prayer and meditation strengthen himself to resist temptation. Forth then went Brother Placid at the bidding of the Abbot, the low clouds were rolling over the fen country, and the bare boughs were rattling in the keen cold breeze, but his eyes were bent downwards in prayer and he heeded them not. Between the wood and the cold bleak mere he wandered without raising his eyes, struggling with his rebellious feelings to bring them into captivity to reason and to faith.

"What is the matter, Brother Placid?" said a tiny voice all at once, and looking, he saw, almost at his feet, a little figure in green small-clothes and peaked cap; so small was he that he sat cross-legged and quite at his ease on the green frill of an early aconite, and looked up with a merry mischievous face. "*Vade retro, Satana,*" cried the startled monk, signing himself with the cross—"*adjuro te, abrenuntio te, anathematizo te*!" he continued, expecting to see the elf shrivel up and disappear, but the only reply was a tinkling little laugh. "Not at all, not at all," laughed

the little gentleman, "you make a great mistake, keep those bad words for bad company, I am not the devil at all." And again his merriment overcame him and he laughed until the aconite shook under him. "*Exorciso te*," began Brother Placid, "*in nomine* . . . ." "Come, come," said the little man, "no more of this, I am only one of the good people, an elfin prince in fact, and I come to do you a good turn. Look here! I know you are troubled . . . Ahem! . . . at your want of voice, but I can show you something that will make you quite content, are you willing?" "Yes," said Brother Placid, now half ashamed of his fears. "Very well," said the Elfin Prince, jumping off his little green throne, "follow me," and he ran down the slope to the edge of the mere so fast, that Placid found it hard to follow him with any religious decorum. "Now," said the Prince, "bathe your face three times in the water of the mere and each time call out as loud as you can: "*Omnis Spiritus*"—then wait for an answer.

It seemed to Brother Placid something like an incantation, "Nevertheless," he said, "the words are holy and the action innocent," so he knelt by the side of the black cold lake and plunged his head in the water. "*Omnis Spiritus*" he cried in his poor hoarse voice, and a faint sound, like an echo, came back to him from across the lake, it seemed like words, yet he could not catch them. "Again," said the green elf, rubbing his little hands. Placid repeated the ceremonial and cried "*Omnis Spiritus*" as before. This time the echo, or at least the answering voice, was clearer. "*Laudet Dominum*" it sang. "Once more," shouted the tiny prince, capering with delight, and as Brother Placid

again bathed his head and cried out the prescribed words, the answer "*Laudet Dominum*" rang all round him, so clear and full, that it seemed as if the whole choir of his brethren were chanting it.

He rose from his knees in wonder: "Now," said the elf, "your ears are opened to what other mortals can never hear, follow me and see what you can hear." Placid accepted this somewhat ambiguous invitation, and scrambled as fast as he could after his little friend along the marshy edge of the lake, and he saw, as he turned round a low headland, and came on a wood reaching down to the water's edge, that all the ground under the trees was white with snowdrops in full flower.

"Listen," said the green gentleman holding up his hand. Brother Placid listened, the wind seemed to shake the snowdrops, and in a moment the wood was filled with the sound of silver chimes clashing like joy bells all together, and then parting with a thousand little peals.

"No earthly chimes were ever so sweet," said the monk; "is it the wind that peals the bells?" The little man looked offended. "My daughters," he said, with a superb wave of his hand towards the snowdrops, and as the monk looked again he saw at each flower, a tiny figure pulling steadily at the stem, as his own lay brothers pulled in the belfrey of the Abbey on feast days. "*Omnis Spiritus*," he cried, his fears returning. "*Laudet Dominum*" rang the answer from each silvery bell, but one by one the chimes died out, the fairies vanished, and the white snowdrops withered. "Do you understand?" said the Prince, wiping away

a miniature tear, "they are white and they die." "*Candidus cantabit moriens.*" "I do not understand," said the monk. "Come here then," said the elf a little severely, "I thought every monk knew Latin." He led the brother back to the edge of the mere and said again: "Listen." Brother Placid listened, and rich full bird notes came in waves across the water to him, plaintive and sorrowful, but so full of melody that he knew not what to think. Every bird and beast that dwelt by the mere was the friend of Placid, and its voice was known to him. "The nightingale in May sings not such notes" he said; "what bird is that?" The Prince pointed to the open water beyond the reeds, and there, gleaming snow-white upon the black ripples, floated a swan. The monk held his breath, the notes grew fainter, and in a few minutes the beautiful head fell back upon the snow-white wings, and the swan was silent in death. "Do you understand now?" said the elf, "the white swan sings in dying." "I begin to understand," said the monk meekly.

"Follow me again then," continued his guide, and led him away from the lake side to a low thatched hut, that stood under the shelter of the wood.

As they drew near the door, the monk heard the sound of a boy's voice, singing loud, sweet, true notes that stirred his very soul:

"Vitam præsta puram
Iter para tutum
Ut videntes Jesum
Semper collætemur" . . . .

sang the boy, and as the elfin prince opened the door,

the monk started with surprise, to see whence the voice came. From a child so crippled, so emaciated, in such rags and dirt, that he seemed hardly a human being.

"He is dying of starvation and neglect," said the elf. "Can we not save him?" asked the monk, his voice trembling with pity. "No," said his guide, as the last long note died away, "he is dead."

"Now do you understand? '*Candidus Cantabit Moriens*,' his soul was white as driven snow, be white, and as you die, you too shall sing—go back to your monastery."

Brother Placid went back, as in a dream, to his monastery, and never again was he assailed by his old temptation, but year by year he grew more humble, more faithful in observance, more mortified and more prayerful.

Ten years afterwards, when the hour of Prime was being solemnly chanted on a great festival, the cantor, who should have intoned the psalm, was troubled. He could not utter a note, a movement of anxiety passed through the ranks of the waiting monks, till Brother Placid, rising in his stall, intoned in a voice so clear and thrilling, that all the monks were silent with astonishment: "Beati immaculati in via," and as none were able to carry on the psalm, through their wonder and emotion, Brother Placid sang aloud by himself till the psalms of Prime were ended. Never had the walls of the choir re-echoed to so sweet a voice, to so pure and sweet a song.

"Lay him on the ashes," said the Abbot, who alone knew his story, "Brother Placid is dying"—and as

they laid him prostrate before the altar, the monk's fervent soul passed away. "*Candidus Cantabit Moriens*," said the Abbott. "Yea," said the Prior, "for years, Brother Placid's spotless life has been sweeter in the monastery, than even the song in which he died."

1890.

NOTES FROM THE RELIGIOUS SPORTSMAN.

It was a slack moment between two burning subjects of conversation. The Categories had been guessed, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost were not yet quite in season. I was a very young Religious at the time and had an insatiable desire, like the Athenians of old, "to tell or hear some new thing" regarding the way of perfection, vices and virtues in spiritual life, etc., so I was a little bored by this intermediate moment, when there was nothing to break a lance about with anyone. Imagine my excitement and delight, when one morning I saw a large placard in the Community Room: "Grand steeplechase for moral virtues, regularly exercised during the past season. To be ridden by the owners, admission free to Religious." "Seculars by invitation only. May 6th, at half-past ten precisely." The list of entries followed, there were 11 horses to run:

1. Fortitude.
2. Temperance.
3. Liberality.
4. Magnificence.
5. Magnanimity.
6. Honour.
7. Affability.
8. Gentleness.
9. Justice.
10. Truth.
11. Good Humour.

I stared at the list in some amazement. To see such virtues, (could they be called moral virtues at all?) as good humour and affability, which I had always regarded as the merest cobs in the moral order, put to run in the same race as the grand old thoroughbreds Fortitude and Temperance. I wondered who could be the starters and judges in this very novel race.

"Wednesday morning will soon be here" I said to myself, "and then all wondering will be at an end." So it was, or rather so it was not, for I never wondered so much as when I saw the course, the spectators, the judges, the stand and . . . .the horses.

It turned out to be a point-to-point handicap race from the market-place of Groschristianismeville to the spire of Religious-perfectionthorp church, straight across as stiff a bit of country as you could see; not a stretch of trimmed hedges and grassy plains—but stern ox rails and thorn fences as old as the hills and as dark as night. Such obstacles! I felt almost a shiver as I looked at them. But now for the spectators, they seemed to be nearly all Religious, and the stands were so well arranged that each order had its place, in most cases, though not in all, they were grouped around their founders. Elias the Prophet and St. Teresa were the centre of a body of Carmelites, and I noticed that, while Elias and many of the Religious seemed to take but little interest in the day's race, yet St. Teresa had her eye on all, and watched it from beginning to end with the greatest attention.

There is the white flannel of the Cistercians with St. Bernard in their midst, the Carthusians with St. Bruno.

There is the black cloak of the Dominicans; another black group, those are the Jesuits, but why is St. Ignatius not there? I was musing over this when some one called out: "Look, here come the Judges," and all eyes were turned to their stand. My neighbour seemed to know all about it and who everybody was, so I turned to her for information: "Pray tell me," I said, "who are the Judges?" "Oh, don't you know," she answered, "well look, that is Noe, he had the ancestors of all those horses with him in the ark, so he is an honorary judge, the one next to him is Holy Job, he had always a good eye for a horse, and he is going to be starter; that stately man next to him is Solomon, horses are rather a sore subject with him, but no one could do without his judgment, so he consented to come; those two following together are Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, both excellent judges of moral virtues, and the one following alone, with his note-book in his hand, is St. Ignatius. But the horses are going to canter past for a preliminary." It would take too long to describe them in detail, so I can only say a word of each.

Liberality was a showy dapple grey horse with a good deal of action, but I heard Holy Job say as he went by "he thinketh himself free like the wild ass of the desert." "Which won't do in religion" put in St. Ignatius drily. Next came Magnificence, a red roan with a gleaming white circle round his flashing eyeball—Magnanimity, a splendid blood bay—Truth, the picture of a hunter, dark brown, the jockey wearing nothing but white. After him, Love of Honour, a tall white horse, his rider wearing crimson with white

sleeves; there was a murmur of admiration for a moment through the spectators (especially the British), but the Judges looked doubtful. Solomon said "Before honour goeth humility," and St. Ignatius added sotto voce, "the drop jump of humiliation will finish him, he cannot get his hind legs under him at all." Gentleness was a bay, a picture of a horse, but too light for the country, it seemed to me. Affability was cream-coloured, I took a fancy to him until I heard St. Thomas say dubiously to Aristotle: "Look at his ears." I saw that he was lop-eared, and felt that he could never stand the pace up the hill of perseverance. Then followed Good Humour, whose appearance was hailed with a shout of laughter, he was a cobby placid looking little piebald, not fifteen hands high, his head nodded cheerfully at every step, but, as to going power, one felt his utmost feat would be a little social hurdle race round a home paddock, the jockey was a match for him, pink jacket and yellow sleeves, rose-coloured pince-nez on the point of his nose, his head thrown far back, his hands nearly up to his chin, his toes pointing straight out, for his heels were innocent of spurs. St. Ignatius turned with some disappointment to St. Thomas: "How could the angelic Doctor have allowed this animal to be entered for the race, he is more fit for a circus than for a steeplechase." The great Dominican turned to his Master: "Your wisdom," he said, "has admitted Good Humour (a frank and honest gaiety in play) to be worthy to run among the moral virtues, I believe?" Aristotle bowed his head in acquiescence. "It is admitted," said St. Thomas to St. Ignatius, who, however, continued to

look with displeasure at the unhappy piebald, who was still capering about in front of the Judges' stand.

But here are the last three, all aged horses, all thoroughbreds, and a hush fell on the crowd as they trotted by: "Justice, Fortitude, Temperance," said my knowing neighbour reverentially. Temperance was a brown, the deep hollows over his eye showed his age, you could see every rib in his side, but the full bright eye and the glossy skin told of his condition, and his collected action showed that he was master of every inch of himself, and well in his master's hand. Fortitude was a chestnut, his arched neck showed a crest as hard as steel, and every movement threw out muscles like whip cord under his polished hide. Close behind him came Justice, of that peculiar colour known as flea-bitten, not attractive to look at, but, anyone who had seen him run before, knew that he would send most, if not all, the showier horses down before him.

And than came the start; Holy Job was patience itself while Magnificence was plunging, and Love of Honour was rearing, and Good Humour making little attempts to start at every sound. At last the flag fell.

Love of Honour jumped away with the lead, followed closely by Magnificence, Magnanimity and Liberality.

I could not distinguish all in the rush that followed, but saw that Temperance and Truth were keeping well in the middle of the course, close together. Affability and Good Humour side by side, shaving the corners as much as they dared, and letting their horses get out of hand. Alas! for poor Good Humour, the first jump was what is known as "in and out," a gorse fence of the plant known as "*Imprévus Officinalis*"—and a rigid

line of hurdles known as "small contradictions of self-love," it was very small altogether, but prickly, and too much for the piebald's legs, he jumped the "in" but would not take the "out," and bolting down the narrow green lane between them, known as "shirking," he carried his rider safely home!

A black untrimmed hedge is the next obstacle, in technical terms "a bull-finch," very thick and very thorny. "What is that?" I asked the knowing one. "Mortification," she answered, "did you ever see such thorns, and look at the brambles! The leading horses will have to break their way through that, but it will be easy enough for those that come after." Magnificence is first at the fence, he winces, and lays back his dainty ears, but he is not the horse to refuse. In another moment, he has shot through the fence like a bullet from a gun, and the thorns close up behind him, as if a bird had been through. Magnanimity does not take the proferred lead, he will take the fence for himself a little higher up where it is even thicker. How confident the jockey is! He has knotted the curb on the horse's neck and is riding with the snaffle only, and how rashly the horse is going, with his head in the air, and those long careless strides. O-oh! what a leap! three times as big as he need have jumped it and now he is down on the other side. "Is he killed?" I asked, my blood ran cold in the silent pause. "No, but his leg is crushed and his girths broken," and the horse is led back dead lame.

"The water jump is next" I heard someone say: "Failure brook;" "it is a good bit of water to cross but the banks are not rotten." I looked and saw that

the horses were going for it almost abreast. A broad bit of ridge and furrow, "Common life field" I heard it called, had given them all room to extend themselves. This is a moment for the riders to show what they are made of, some take hold of their horse's head with a jerk, and then hurry them nervously at the "cold bath"—others take their feet out of the stirrups, to be quite ready to jump off. Affability politely offers the lead to some one else. But look at those four keeping so closely together. Fortitude, Justice, Temperance and Truth, all are old hands and have faced "failure brook" before. Justice and Temperance cross it like swallows, Fortitude like a flash of lightning. "In or over" says his jockey to Truth, it is *in* this time, not over, but horse and rider scramble out none the worse, and the others have been so long on the banks or between the banks that Truth has still a good lead, but behind the first three. And now comes the moment that St. Ignatius feared for Love of Honour, the deep jump of "Humiliation," a drop of some five feet beyond the fence. Like so many white horses, he is very fine in front, but his hind legs are weak, the jockey is pulling him too hard, as if he feared a fall; there they are, over and down, the white horse is pulled out, but both have had enough of it for this time.

Magnificence is next in trouble, there is a ditch at the corner of that field called "little things," that does not seem to suit his taste, he has turned rusty there, and is plunging and refusing, turning his head every way but the right way, so doing, he cannons full against Liberality, who was going to cross the ditch of "little

things" handsomely. Liberality's hind leg catches on the barbed wire of Illusion, and Magnificence is on his back in the ditch. Our ranks are getting thinner. Truth and Affability seem to have escaped, but Truth the beautiful brown, has now come down, and spiked himself upon the harrow of a pair of scruples, that were lying under the hedge (they had just been harrowing the field of conscience, but it was a most unsportsman-like act to leave them hidden behind the fence of "Fraternal correction," over which Truth would have gone so gallantly).

I look round to see who is left? Gentleness is sticking fast in a boggy place called "Discouragement." Affability is puffing up the hill of Perseverance, but almost at his last gasp; there remain Fortitude, Justice and Temperance. The hill is a great trial at the end of a four mile course. Fortitude has the lines of foam on his neck and shoulders, his sides show signs of the spurs, and his stretched nostrils are scarlet within, nevertheless he breasts the hill gallantly and may yet be first. Temperance is still going as steadily as he went over the first mile. Justice keeps close behind, and the cries of the crowd are heard in front "Temperance wins," "Four to one on Fortitude." When all of a sudden, the old flea-bitten horse Justice rouses himself and pulls past the other two ten yards from the post—the three are close together, to us it seems a dead heat between them, till we see the places proclaimed:

1. JUSTICE. 2. FORTITUDE. 3. TEMPERANCE, and loud indeed are the cheers as the old three canter back past the Judges' stand. "It was necessarily so"

said Aristotle to St. Ignatius, whose sympathies had been with Fortitude throughout, "Justice is the Queen of moral virtues." But while the Judges were talking I saw our Venerable Mother Foundress go quickly down to feed the beaten horses, and as she passed her hand kindly over their quivering nostrils, she said to them, "Never mind being beaten once, get Faith, Hope and Charity to ride you, and you will win next time."

I went home, and made many reflexions on that steeplechase.

1891

"WHEN ST. GEORGE GOES ON HORSEBACK, ST. IVES GOES ON FOOT."

An Introspective Sketch.

"My mind to me a kingdom is,
Such present joys therein I find,
That it excels all other bliss
That earth affords, or grows by kind."

"My mind to me a kingdom is, and so it has a history . . . "

"I distinguish the major," the mistress of studies will here interrupt with some warmth, "not every kingdom has a history."

"I grant the distinction, but every kingdom about which it is worth while to talk, in the Christmas holidays, has a history. Three weeks are too short, and the company is too select, to be occupied about savage, or moribund nations that have no history."

Therefore my kingdom has a history. It has a government duly organized. It has also a strongly constituted opposition. The opposition creates a certain friction and keeps the kingdom from stagnation. This is morally healthy, for as long as we live in the valley of tears and change and death; stagnation, cessation of movement and of conflict mean, not peace, but corruption. The life of man on earth, is warfare.

This is a fundamental law, and for want of understanding it, much trouble of mind arises, that might be avoided. Trouble of mind is not that healthy movement and invigorating friction, that is so desirable. It is rather a palsy, that makes the eye misty, the voice give an uncertain sound, the sword arm tremble, and the foot slide.

The life of man on earth is a warfare. Politics, legislation, commerce, the peaceful arts, pastoral life and social intercourse, these are accidental circumstances in spiritual life. Warfare is the element of the soul. It must be so. But there are diverse conflicts in which the soul may be engaged. Sometimes the mind is in conflict, sometimes the will. And, as in the material order of things, St. George is the patron of soldiers, and St. Ives the patron of lawyers, so, in the kingdom of the mind, we may say that St. George is the patron of the will in its warfare, and St. Ives of the conflicts of the mind.

St. Ives is a lawyer, a barrister of the Inner Temple, he wears a wig and a gown, and when the mind is in presence of a *case* that must be decided at once, or when any great mental conflict is going on, St. Ives has as much business as he can well manage.

But, perhaps you do not even know the names of the courts where all this business goes on. Put out of your mind, for the moment, all that you know of the High Court of Justice, Chancery, Queen's Bench and the rest. In the Kingdom of my mind there are three Courts of Law, (1) The High Court of Incomprehensibles, (2) the Doubt and Muddle Division, (3) The High Court of Scruples.

You can see by the expression of the face when the courts are sitting, and, if you are learned in the law, you can even detect which court is sitting. Of course I do not suppose you would be so rude as to go right up and stare in at the windows: the fourth rule of modesty forbids it. But take an illustration. The favourite question of predestination has cropped up, and the High Court of Incomprehensibles is holding its Sessions. St. Ives half closes the window blinds of both eyes, and draws a particular curtain across the forehead, two perpendicular and two horizontal folds. Then you may know that the High Court of Incomprehensibles is sitting—the whole expression is one of anguish. St. Ives knows beforehand what the result will be, he is a Saint already in glory and so is not disturbed. He knows that when all the witnesses have been summoned and cross-examined, and the barristers have exhausted their eloquence, and the learned Judge has summed up, the verdict will always be the same: "We don't understand."

If a case is being tried before the Division of Doubts and Muddles, the door of the Court is always left open; there is a thorough draught in and a thorough draught out ("sighs," is the legal term applied to this), and

every one gets chilly from the counter currents, and all the words you catch in the general altercation that fills the court are, *if*, and *but*, and *why*, and *except*, and *look here*, and *on the contrary*, from which you will easily see that no clear verdict can be delivered. So this Court always breaks up in a state of uncertainty. In the end St. Ives is obliged to close the door, and the business of life has to go on with the case unsettled, and we have to put our foot in it with as little hesitation as possible, and then regret it gracefully.

In the Court of Scruples, St. Ives is perfectly at home, as he has seen nearly all the Saints in the Calendar through it, except the early martyrs, in whose time the Court was not yet established, and the Holy Innocents who never came of age. So he can direct the inquiry, and see the moment at which it should be stopped, and quote precedents, and sum up the case just as well as any judge. His great aim is of course to get people through the Court as quickly as possible, and not leave them in it for life, like a neglected Chancery suit.

But while we are chatting in the lobby of the High Court of Scruples I see that something has happened. In one instant the High Court of Incomprehensibles is emptied as if by magic, the Doubt and Muddle Division has followed it in the twinkling of an eye, plaintiff, defendant, counsel on both sides, witnesses in a solid mass, even the Judges following helter skelter, and in the High Court of Scruples there is not a creature left.

What is the meaning of this? The meaning of this is war.

St. George is on horseback, so all the Inns of Court are deserted and every one has followed him. St. Ives, quite accustomed to this, and quite unruffled, gathers up the papers, that the learned Judges have dropped in their flight, passes his hand thoughtfully through the ample curls of his wig, and goes home on foot. He is out of work for the present.

Will you follow to the interior Forum and see St. George among his followers? He is on the very same charger that appears on the reverse of our sovereigns. I know disagreeable critics have been found, so ill-natured, as to say that his charger has capped hocks, that there is something suspiciously like a curb on his off hind leg, and that they would not put too much confidence in the foreleg, that has just come to the ground. No matter, this is St. George's favourite charger, and right royally he rides him. He would rather, like St. Ignatius, have some chargers half dead, if their spirit is good, than others, in first rate condition, but without spirit.

Of course the regular troops are closest round him, in perfect parade order. Take a glance at them, it is instructive. St. George does not like the Blues, that is why they are not here. He considers them a positive impediment in the way of concerted action, but "King's Own," and "Queen's Own" regiments, and those with audacious mottoes, such as that of the King's Royal Irish, "Pristinae virtutes memores"; the Scots Greys with their "Second to none"; and the grim word "Firm" of the Worcester Regiment of the line; these are his special friends. But you see a mixed multitude of followers beyond, all the civilian contingent, the

Judges from the Bench, the barristers, witnesses, jurymen, that have just come pouring out of the Law Courts. You see the clean shaved Q.C.'s cantering up on weedy horses, and learned Judges pacing sedately on cobs, and excited witnesses in costermongers' carts, all coming by different roads, but all converging to the same point, the interior Forum, where St. George is making ready to fight. Ah! now I see you have understood, this is exactly what we always mean, when we talk of having our wits at a focus. This is the focus, and those are the wits. And if you want to fight, you must not be in the Courts of Law, but have your wits at a focus, even if they only come trotting up behind costermongers' donkeys.

Has every civilian become a soldier, then?

Yes, every one, for as Tennyson sang, many years ago:

"I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,
That the smooth-faced, snub-nosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,
And strike if he could, were it but with his cheating yard-wand home."

And so they are all going out to fight the dragon.

What is the dragon?

Oh, you must not ask too many questions, you think this is a fairy tale, and that it has to end well, and that they will make a hearthrug of the dragon's skin, and "live happy ever after."

Nothing of the sort. Go back to the place from which we set out. The life of man on earth is a warfare, and either your mind must be in the law courts, or your will at the wars. But the point of the proverb is this, that if the will is at the war, the law courts are empty, and vice-versa. That is to say, if you don't understand, fight, and your difficulties will melt away like magic. "If any man will *do* His will he shall *know* the doctrine."

And as the highest activity of the mind needs repose, and the highest development of the will needs action, take good advice, and keep out of the Law Courts.

Don't stand gazing about, but be up and doing.

Don't argue : fight.

Follow Saint George on horseback, and leave Saint Ives to go home on foot by himself.

1896

THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE.

It is the title of a silly old book (I hope it was not written by the relation of one of ours present) ! Perhaps there is more in the title than there is in the book, as sometimes happens.

It opens three distinct trains of thought :

(1) An unquiet eye. (2) A quiet eye. (3) the harvest of a quiet eye.

An unquiet eye, it is suggested, gathers no harvest; why not? since the harvest is for all.

There is another question to answer first, which will solve the second. What makes an unquiet eye? Here we shall all agree. Passion makes the eye

unquiet; how so? Because passion makes it intent upon one thing, to the exclusion of others; makes it intent upon its own object, the object of its love, its fear, its hatred, its desire, its aversion. Now from one object you can reap no harvest, therefore there is no harvest for the unquiet eye. Let us go into details. The scholastics tell us that in the things of sense, too strong an impression corrupts the sense—if you have looked long and fixedly at scarlet, you cannot distinguish between two delicate shades of grey or brown, therefore all beauties in grey or brown (and there are many), are lost to you—they belong to the harvest of a quiet eye.

Again, if you are made restless by the desire always to see something *new*, if *old* and familiar things pall upon you, then you travel through at express speed, and watch the others reaping the harvest; but the harvest is not for you.

So if your eye is morbid and prejudiced, it sees itself and its own thoughts reflected in everything, but self is not a harvest; who would be content with such a reaping, though it is a certain one? "If thou seek thyself, without doubt thou shalt find thyself" says the Imitation. "*Absit*" says the Apostle. God forbid that self should be my harvest!

Let us leave the unquiet eye with the observation of Father Lancisius, "Reflect and amend" if your eye *is* unquiet and if you wish to reap a harvest.

2. The quiet eye.

As the ideal portrait of a quiet eye, see St. Thomas on the "bon esprit." Therefore the quiet eye is:

Open and receptive, that it may see; the eye of the disciple.

Contemplative, that it may reflect.

Reasonable, that it may compare and judge.

Docile, that it may be corrected.

Always open, always contemplative, always docile, always reasonable; that means always *even*, and not at the mercy of a sudden gust of impressions, "immoderate sadness or inept joy" as Louis de Blois has it; or of a thunderstorm of conflicting passions, or a blight of discouragement and inaction.

So much for a quiet eye, although the half is not told.

3. Now for the harvest of a quiet eye.

The quiet eye has its sowing time, its growing time, its ripening time, its harvest time. The corn is not cut and carried until it is ripe. That is to say, the harvest is not for childhood or early youth. "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, patiently bearing till he receive the early and the latter rain."

Sowing time is the time for observation. "He that has ears to hear, let him hear"; one might add, He that has eyes to see let him see. Yet the Imitation asks, "What dost thou here standing looking about, since this is not the place of thy rest?" The Scholastics would answer as usual, "I distinguish." I distinguish between *looking* and *looking about*, the latter is aimless, idle, in search of enjoyment—the former is deliberate, attentive, and done for an end. One stores the mind, the other dissipates it. Look then if you wish to reap a harvest, but look thoughtfully, patiently, watchfully, and know why you look.

Growing time is the time of reflection, the seed is sown, the facts are stored in the mind. Now they germinate and spring up, a wealth of them sometimes, when the young mind awakes and feels its growing power, thought, theory and bold soaring speculation, which it is tempted to take for the "vision of the latter days," and the Master looks on and smiles, not unkindly, at all this, but says "wait."

Ripening time comes, correcting time; what was watery and weak in the young plants shrivels instead of ripening. "The words of the Lord are fire tried" and the sun of truth is a great searcher of hearts. Let them go, all your favourite thoughts, they will not stand this searching and ripening of correction and of truth, they are not worth keeping, and they are not of your harvest.

The reaping time comes at last. What is the harvest? The fruit of years of thought and labour and observation; it is something that cannot be bought for the wealth of Ethiopia or Saba; a precious oil which a wise virgin cannot impart to a foolish one; something which compensates for the absence of almost any other quality of mind, while nothing else can make compensation for it; the harvest is EXPERIENCE.

1896

CAN THE ETHIOPIAN CHANGE HIS SKIN OR THE LEOPARD HIS SPOTS ?

A Lost Page from the "*Summa contra Gentiles.*"

1. It would seem that the Ethiopian can change his skin and the leopard his spots : for the Talmud says that the skin of Cham from being white was turned to black, by the curse of his father Noe, and it is said that the Ethiopians are descended from this Cham; now if the curse of Noe could change the skin of Cham from white to black, then a Christian blessing could change the skin of an Ethiopian from black to white.

Therefore an Ethiopian can change his skin.

2. It is said in Daniel that the hair of Nabuchodonosor was changed and became as the feathers of eagles. Now it is a greater change for the hair of a man to grow as the feathers of eagles, than for the hair of a leopard to change his spots.

Therefore the leopard can change his spots.

3. Saint Paul says that the body of man, being sown in corruption shall be raised in incorruption, and being sown a natural body shall rise a spiritual body; now there is a greater diversity between a natural body and a spiritual body, and between one that is corruptible and another that is incorruptible, than between an Ethiopian and a white man, or a leopard with or without spots.

Therefore the Ethiopian can change his skin and the leopard his spots.

4. Isaias says that the leopard shall lie down with the kid; now unless the leopard has changed his nature, the natural fear of so fierce an animal would forbid the kid to lie down with the leopard, but as the greater includes the lesser, it must be thought that as the leopard could change his nature, so also could he change his spots.

Therefore the leopard can change his spots.

But it is the contrary:

For the Ethiopian is a name which signifies "the man of the burnt countenance," therefore if one who was born an Ethiopian could change his skin, he would no longer be the man of the burnt countenance, therefore he would no longer be an Ethiopian. Therefore the Ethiopian cannot change his skin.

In like manner the leopard is known also by the name of the "spotted pard," therefore if the leopard could change his spots he would no longer be the spotted pard, but merely the "pard" or panther; but a panther is not a leopard. Therefore the leopard cannot change his spots.

CONCLUSION: The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, or the leopard his spots.

1. It must be answered to the first argument, that, although it was by the curse of his father, according to the Talmud, that the skin of Cham was changed from white to black, yet, this curse has since been changed to a blessing, for by it the Ethiopian is better able to endure the heat of his own country; therefore it would not be the proper end of a blessing to change his skin again from black to white.

2. We must reply to the second argument, that it is not said in Daniel that the hairs of Nabuchodonosor became the feathers of eagles, but, that they became *as* the feathers of eagles, which must be understood of certain accidental likenesses in the habit, and not in the substance of the hairs, as that they should have become as quills; but as we have seen above, for a leopard to change his spots would be for him to become a panther, now this is a greater change than that which is spoken of in the hairs of Nabuchodonosor. Therefore the leopard cannot change his spots.

3. It must be replied to the third argument, that St. Paul is treating of a time when the present order shall have passed away, and when there shall be no more time, nor death, nor decay; now under these conditions the leopard will have ceased to exist. Therefore the leopard cannot change his spots.

4. It is to be answered to the fourth argument that it is not by reason of the spots of the leopard that the kid will fly from him, but rather by reason of the nature of the leopard, and that the kid would equally fly from a pard or panther that had other spots, or from a puma that had not any spots; again, the lesser change is not included in the greater, for, it is known that there is a species of leopard that may be tamed and become docile to man, and this is the "hunting leopard" or "cheetah," but it has never been heard that this species of leopard has changed his spots; therefore it is not to be inferred that if the leopard can change his nature so likewise can he change his spots.

Therefore the leopard cannot change his spots.

This lost page from St. Thomas "*Summa contra Gentiles*" throws light upon a question that has puzzled the head of a beginner in spiritual life (*i.e.*, the Novice) and even that of the proficient (*i.e.*, the Aspirant). There is a school among these powerful and original thinkers that cries "destroy," and there is another that cries "preserve." The first argues that the Ethiopian can and ought to change his skin, and the leopard his spots; the second that they cannot and ought not even to attempt to do so.

"Destroy" is the school of Jeremias, "The Lord said to me, Lo! I have set thee this day over the nations and over kingdoms to root up and to pull down and to waste and to destroy and to build and to plant," that is, make a clean sweep of everything and start fresh on nothing. Many Aspirants belong to this school.

"Preserve" is the school of Isaias, "I will turn my hand to thee and I will clean purge away thy dross and will take away all thy tin . . . after this thou shalt be called . . . a faithful city," that is, try your ore in the fire, throw away your dross and keep your fine gold. There are more Professed in this school.

There is then fine gold in every character, for God saw all things that He had made, and they were very good, but eight times in the same chapter it is repeated that the living creatures, vegetable and animal in each order were made after their kinds, or "according to its kind," and this "kind" is that which shall never be changed.

But again we may ask, are these kinds, in the spiritual as well as in the material order of the

creation? and we must answer that they undoubtedly are, for the visible things of creation are ever the symbols of those that are invisible. Again the Apostle asks, "Are all teachers?" and again "If the whole body were eye, where would be the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?"

It remains therefore clear that there are "kinds" in the spiritual life, and that each one of us is "according to our kind," like the animals of the Book of Genesis.

If it be laid down for greater security against the "destructive" school that the following types are not literal in all points, are not complete, are not absolutely exclusive of one another, are not exhaustive nor yet true in all particulars, but only some suggestions of some things that may be true; we may say that there are spiritual natures of four classes: the spiritual farmer, the spiritual sportsman, the spiritual statesman, and the spiritual apothecary.

Let us consider the "kind" of spiritual farmer. We all know the description of the farmer in the book of Ecclesiasticus, the man "that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad, and driveth the oxen therewith, and is occupied in their labours, and his whole talk is about the offspring of bulls. He gives his mind to turn up furrows, and his care is to give the kine fodder." A plain man therefore, not imaginative, not enthusiastic. Rodriguez would call him "cheerfully grave and gravely cheerful," practical withal, and persevering, no great friend of learning, doubtful of new enterprises, suspicious of arts, observant, slow, capable of profiting by experience, not free in communicating it, conscientious, immovable as to duty,

not careless as to its reward. Many of this type filled the rank and file of the great Abbeys of the Middle Ages; ruled and bearing the yoke patiently, in the fear of God, now joyful heirs to the kingdom of God.

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?"

Study this type in comparison with the next, that of the spiritual sportsman, and see if by any possible process one could become the other. The spiritual sportsman is sanguine in temperament; bright rather than deep in intellect; content with to-day as it comes, and to-morrow in its turn; ready in resource and quick in action; fearless of danger to a fault, and hopeful almost to excess; capable of great things, but not always conducting them to a happy end; buoyant enough always to begin again; happy enough to be unconscious of self and of the reflex movement of the soul, enduring of hardships through sheer light-heartedness; carrying others on by personal impetus, rather than teaching them to stand on their own feet; yet if able to learn obedience and perseverance, it is a character that has the making of the best of missioners.

Very different from this, is the character of the spiritual statesman. Calm in mind and resolute in will, large and far-reaching in view, just in subordinating lesser ends to greater ones, and in all proportioning means to the end. Looking with no superficial glance, but reading through and through mind and soul, or tangle of motives; concentrated in attentive thought, yet flexible enough to follow the thoughts of others, and to lead while seeming to follow. Will is the dominant faculty, but will directed by strong reasoning and by the flash of intuition that is never

far from genius; *strong* is the word that best describes it, strong in view, in aim, in measure, strong without noise or effort, strong in patience as well as in action, strong enough to be always gentle, strong for itself and others, the spiritual raw material of great Popes and prelates and all great Rulers of men.

There remains the type of the spiritual apothecary: a compound and compounding type, one that must always struggle against the too much of introspection and the too little of expansion; one that lives in weights and measures, in seeking, enquiring, balancing and considering, falling, rising, desponding, doubting; the Mr. Timorous, of the Pilgrim's Progress; yet in truth a pilgrim, full of earnest effort, desirous of progress, but losing time by the very fever of this desire and anxiety; groping with lanterns at noon-day, and creeping on all-fours from fear of pride in walking upright. If he is advanced in the ecclesiastical state, it will be as a canonist or as a casuist, but never as monk or missioner or prelate; to the end of his days, in the height of his sanctity, the skin of the Ethiopian and the spots of the leopard will cleave to him.

Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?

As Ecclesiastes says, "Let us hear together the conclusion of the discourse," and let it be, according to the teaching of our Mother Goetz:

"Restez *vous*, mais en purifiant, en élevant et surnaturalisant la nature que vous avez, ne cherchez pas à vous faire comme celle-ci ou celle-là, vous ne réussirez pas; perfectionnez-vous dans votre couleur, mais ne la changez pas."

1897

AS HAVING NOTHING YET POSSESSING ALL THINGS.

On the feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis, leave was given for a little extraordinary rejoicing among the Franciscan members of the Church triumphant. St. Clare saw to it, as in duty bound, being the eldest daughter of the Saint. She prepared therefore some particular spiritual refection for all her own daughters; some she set to discoursing among themselves on the special virtues or graces to be drawn from the five mystical wounds of the Sacred Stigmata of their Blessed Father, and others to sing in parts a Canticle in praise of his Lady Poverty, to ravish his ears, for she sometimes thought that the Patriarch of her Order was a little pensive and regretful, seeing that his lady might not be admitted with him into the heavenly Court. After a time seeing that they were all absorbed in their several themes, she withdrew and sought the company of the Lady Abbess of the Benedictine order, St. Hildegarde, to whom she looked up with veneration and in whose conversation she took much delight. And having found her in the valley of heavenly solitude:

"Dear Lady Abbess," said St. Clare, "not long ago, when looking down on earth to see what flowers of virtue I could offer to our King and God, I perceived a whole nest of very well intentioned little nuns, who were diverting themselves after the manner of good Religious in discoursing of virtues, and of these one part had taken my name for their standard and were holding up the part of 'having nothing' as being the expression

of true Poverty, and the other part had taken my Lady Abbess' name, calling themselves the party of St. Hildegarde, and were for ' possessing all things ' in the spirit of poverty, and in the end it remained an open question between them, whether they might better sanctify themselves as 'having nothing' or as 'possessing all things.' Wherefore My Lady Abbess, I beg of your charity to decide this question, for the peace of their souls and for the honour of my Lady Holy Poverty."

To whom the Lady Abbess St. Hildegarde made answer :

"It were better that you first, my well beloved Mother and Daughter, should propound what is to be said concerning 'having nothing,' since this is, according to your rule, the life of the blessed on earth, and the surest way to the Kingdom of Heaven."

Then St. Clare, with the light of blessedness aflame upon her face, made answer to St. Hildegarde :

"When the Word of God was first spoken in secret to my heart, it invited me to go out from all created things, and to have none of them, and to be diligent in casting out, first the possession, and then the inward care of those things, so that my soul might be held by no attachment and hampered by no care and entangled by no business, but might fly as a wild bird to its solitude, and be rocked on the winds and waves, dependent on the Providence of its Creator, having nothing to lose and nothing to provide for. And this is the way of my daughters in the Church militant; never are they so joyful as when they have nothing, and if at any time they begin to have or even to desire

to have, or seek for any security, then do they lose the liberty of spirit that was given to me for them, and thus, my Lady Abbess, do I understand the spirit of Poverty, as freedom and detachment from all things even in desire, and this has been ever to my daughters the secret of beatitude on earth.

Then the Lady Abbess St. Hildegarde, turning to St. Clare, embraced her after the manner of the spirits of the just made perfect, with a holy aspiration, and said :

"Behold dearest Mother and Daughter you have spoken the truth out of your heart, and yet you have spoken but half of it; for to have nothing is not the end to which you would attain, but rather through having nothing to possess all things. You would not be content to be left without inheritance or hope, possessing only your own spirit of renunciation, for that, my dearest daughter, were but a cynic self-sufficiency, or the poverty of the Philosophers, not the poverty of Christ; and though you have stated but half of it, I know that it was because your heart was too full of the whole to deem the full statement of it necessary. Yet for the daughters of man, believe me, my Sister and Daughter, you cannot express the truth too clearly, for though one or two among many, illuminated by grace, may open their innermost heart to your meaning, there are many others who will fall short of it, and therefore as you take to heart the spiritual comfort of the many little nuns whom you saw, I will set before you what I consider to be the whole truth of the matter, or *more* at least of the truth, for who can know the fulness of the truth, while yet walking in

the valley of tears, from which we have by God's mercy been liberated. This then I believe concerning the life of poverty upon earth :

"That every soul must pass by the Gate of Heaven, having nothing, if it would attain to the palace of possessing all things, that is, to the possession of Him who is the all, and in whom are all things.

"That the soul must despoil itself, so far as grace invites it, of possessions, and, so far as its courage can follow the invitation, of all limited desires; that all its desires may be for Him Who is without limit and Who alone can satisfy it.

"That when the soul has cast away what may be possessed and the desire of it, when it has embraced the poverty of its being and saluted its own nothingness with the kiss of peace, then, it can enter into the new life of possessing all things, and into the inheritance of the hundredfold which our most dear Lord promised to those who forsake all that they may follow Him. Then it is set free from the troublesome onsets of the enemies who assail those who *have* without possessing. For while a man has anything in itself, he may hold it by a frail and perishable tenure, but when he possess it, then, by the very force of the word, he may be said to have sat down therein; he is no longer claiming, and assailed by counter-claims against his title; he is no longer fighting to maintain his occupancy nor harrassed with doubts as to his rights; he has no anxiety of losing what he possesses, all these uncertainties show instability in the holding and demand vigilance, provision, and a standing defence; whereas possession sits down under its own vine and fig tree, and calmly

looks around on its holdings, without fear; and, what does it possess?

The poor man possessing all things possesses first himself, by meekness and patience; next he possesses the whole world, either by contemplation or because he has made it his footstool, by noble contempt; he possesses by faith the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. He possesses Heaven itself, I hope. He possesses all the good that is done in the world by charity. He possesses God Himself by a confident and joyful anticipation of beatitude. And so we, that are already in the possession of vision, may stretch out our hands, and say to this poor man: 'All are yours, whether it be Paul or Apollo, or Cephas or the world, or life or death, or things present or things to come, all are yours; and you are Christ's and Christ is God's.' "

After which discourse the two Abbesses returned each to the society of her own spiritual daughters.

1898

COLOUR.

We are all familiar with the common teaching and experiments on light, undertaken by the branches of the Education Department, for the enlightenment of the Nation. The death of this department, let us bear in mind, is announced for December 31st., and it would be becoming to shed over it an educational tear, or, "here fetch a sigh," according to the instruction of the German spiritual author. But this is impossible.

Departments have no feelings and cannot be hurt at our insensibility. They are not always "lovely and pleasant in their lives," so their death is the less bemoaned. Besides, they are likely to revive in altered, and possibly not improved form. "What a terrible thought is that of the resurrection"! as the nephew was heard to murmur at the aunt's funeral.

But in the absence of Departmental control, we may hazard some considerations on colour that would not bear investigation at South Kensington. To express it in the customary formula of the Noviceship:

"For my composition of place I will consider myself as a dispersed ray of light."

Then follow the usual considerations. Who? What? Why?

Who? I.

What? A ray of sunlight, dispersed through a prism into seven bands of monochromatic light.

How? In the seven stages of seven years that will have composed my life when I reach the golden jubilee year of fifty.

Why? That I may consider their colour.

1. Remember what you were at *no* years old and from thence to seven years old. Life was in its primitive and most elementary form. Its rays were very slightly refrangible, its colour bright red. Life was gaudy. Your soul was of course in the first grace of its baptism, but your character! your temperament! Putting out of your mind those infant saints, who fasted at six months old and were advanced contemplatives at three, the average Christian baby is in a state like the babyhood of nations, nomadic, barbarous, predatory,

rapacious, warlike, struggling for existence, conscious that "I am I" and of very little besides; an existence that when seen in later light appears to have been mostly *prose*. This may be an unfair and prejudiced judgment, a misinterpretation, I am no connoisseur of babies, and am open to conviction. I am only speaking of the natural order and maintain that baby life is bright red.

2. Things better themselves considerably as we approach the seventh year and a tinge of orange mingles in our red, something of promise, something of vision, something a little wider than the interior "*Heimathskunde*" of our inner life before the age of reason. But why *orange?* Because it has a little more refrangibility, a little more "sweet reasonableness," a little more Christianity in its warfare. If babyhood is barbarism these are the years of young Christianity, such Christianity as that of Clovis and his convert Franks, or Charles Martel, the "Hammer"; a Christianity without modifications, or shades of tone, or "allowances." We loved or we hated, we blessed or we anathematised, we were good or bad, and other people were good or bad, all one or all the other, either hot or cold, but never tepid. We loved the positive, the individual. We were suspicious of generalities, scornful of abstractions, doubtful of first principles, credulous, superstitious, variable as weathercocks, and with all that, in our own way, dogged, narrow, Philistine.

3. But a better time is coming. From fourteen to twenty-one is the wonderland of our life, the age of our mysticism, the years of ideals. We are then the discoverers of our own lives. Our world is new every day. Either we are sailing towards new shores, daring

mariners in search of the unknown, and day by day the horizon dips lower and our stars rise higher; or we are explorers by land, and new wonders reveal themselves on each day's march. Some of us go by sea and others by land all through our lives. We do not love the glories of these years less, now that we can look back and see that some of them were clouds and some were mirages of the desert. They did their work and they were the band of yellow, clear gold in our lives. We would not have been without a day of them. In these years each morning brought its message "onward," each evening asked "whither?" and the morning answered "onward again."

4. But "Onward" means change, and our coming of age brings us up with a shock against the *real*. Wonderland is earth, and earth is green, and questioning becomes imperious for an answer, and we know that "whither?" ought to be changed for "Where?" and that the ideal must take shape and show itself forth as something that *is*. And we want, above all things, to *do* and not only to discover, to stamp the mark of our individuality on *something*. These are our *humanist* years, exuberant in action, and still glowing with the imagery of our golden age. Years when we are gathering experience and learning the inexorable conclusions of our incircumspect premises; little by little we draw nearer to a graver time:

5. From twenty-eight to thirty-five. The cool clear blue age of Dialectics.

"Drive well, O mind! use all thy art
Thou charioteer! O feeling heart
Be thou a bridle, firm and strong,
For the Lord rideth and the way is long."

Reason is taking the mastery in us. We are not pessimists from twenty-eight to thirty-five, but neither are we optimists. We have set our faces to that which *is*, not to that which might, could, should, or would be—if? We are beginning to know, not to guess; to judge, not to *feel* the answers to our questions. It is our Scholastic age, and these are critical years in our formation. For if Dialectics go too far, and the mind instead of broadening and sinking down on its base in the *real*, grinds itself to a knife edge; if we learn to cut and dissect our ideals and those of others; if wary reason stops and sounds too dubiously the chasms over which feeling and imagination used to carry us in one flight, then the riper and richer years of our life are dwarfed. We shall in future be of value to the library or the museum, but not to *life*.

6. Thirty-five to forty-two. Years of indigo hue. "Quam sordet tellus!" God's stars stand out upon an indigo, not upon a black sky. If our dialectic years have turned it black, we have made for ourselves a painted sky and painted stars, but if they have only given depth to our blue, then we have the age of true asceticism, deep, responsible, austere, keen-eyed, daring in thought and strong in act, greatly illuminated from heaven.

7. From forty-two to forty-nine. The seventh stage is the band of violet, the most refrangible of all rays, the last band of monochromatic light, the time when you finally *are what you are*. Why have so many been found to sing the glories of youth and the praises of old age? and so few to speak of the graces of middle

life? Perhaps youth and age have more to say for themselves and more freedom in saying it. Perhaps it is good to keep silence on what no one can know until they reach it.

And yet for once it might be well to speak, and say that it is a stage, which, those who have reached, would not exchange against anything that has gone before. Now that life consists more of answers than of questions, more of appreciation than of criticism, more of the fruit than the flower, more room in the retrospect, more of the vision of the end . . . .

For fifty, the golden year is coming, and after that we shall have not coloured but white light, complete, unbroken, collected, the very light of eternity. The rainbow colours were round about the throne that St. John saw in his apocalyptic vision, but He that sat thereon was clothed in white, His countenance was "white as the light," because it was the light itself.

1899

DISCONNECTED THOUGHTS ON PLATITUDES.

Platitudes: They are as their name itself announces, dwellers on the flat, "of the flat, flatty," without height, without depth, without poetry, without wisdom. But the young logician takes us up sharply thus: "All platitudes are dwellers on the flat, but all dwellers on the flat are not platitudes." True. And in the presence of the young logician let us above all try to be exact. Therefore: What is a platitude?

A platitude is a somewhat pretentious enunciation of a well-known principle or fact, as though it threw new light upon the question or situation under discussion. It is generally rather vaguely expressed. Let us distinguish further and note varieties of platitudes.

A platitude is not produced by frequent repetition of a truth. This, if it be a minor or incomplete truth produces a truism; if it be a major truth, completely and pointedly uttered, is gives us an aphorism, an axiom, a maxim, but never a platitude. Thus it is a truism to say "that you cannot burn the candle at both ends," that "the burnt child dreads the fire," but it is not a platitude. If we say "That art is long but life is short," that "two straight lines can never meet more than once," that the "race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," in spiritual things; that "God is all and everything else is nothing," you have axioms or maxims, but not platitudes.

There are three kinds af platitudes:

The simple platitude, which is the hollow resonance of an empty mind, trying to appear full. This platitude is the conversational refuge of the thoughtless and the superficial. "Samson was a very strong man!" said Lady Platitude, anxious to make a pious remark to the late Bishop of Cashel. "Yes, Ma'am, but you are stronger," replied the Bishop, "for you have dragged him in by the hair of the head."

The compound platitude which has two ends, to shield myself and not offend you. This is the platitude of the timid and the cautious. "Well! that is a baby!" said the American Prelate, thus masking his own ignorance, flattering the hyper-sensitive mother and throwing dust into the eyes of the connoisseur.

The complex platitude, to attain several ends—asserting one's importance; seeming to know "the inwardness of things"; forming a "school of thought" whose education consists in sonorous phrases, whose disciples are taken for a cheap pension and no extras. This is the platitude of the worldly. Politicians of meagre talent and fluid principles indulge much in these platitudes. Here is a complex platitude chosen from the utterances of "Imperial Perks," the Nonconformist M.P. "Our foreign policy ought to be one blended of conciliation and firmness, with a steadfast maintenance of our own claims and due consideration for the rights of other nations." This is faultless as far as it goes, but . . . . an absolute platitude.

The worst of all platitudes is the pious platitude, whether simple, compound, or complex, "*Corruptio optimi pessima.*"

"Vacant chaff well meant for grain," Tennyson plaintively sings of the condolences that reached him after Arthur Hallam's death.

"Go in peace, be you warmed and filled," St. James makes his worldling cuttingly say to the "poor relation." (There are spiritual poor relations whose difficulties for food and warmth are just as pressing. "What man is there among you," says Our Lord, "of whom if his son shall ask bread will he reach him a stone?" Who is there of us, from whom bread might be asked to satisfy soul-hunger, and who would offer a platitude?)

Where do platitudes originate?

Platitudes are not "true sorts," to use a gardener's phrase, but hybrids that grow in a particular class of mind.

Roughly speaking there are three classes of mind.

1. The rural mind, which has its solitudes of original thought, its mountains and valleys, its oceans and lakes and rivers; a mind that is calm, silent, naturally contemplative, slow to utter itself, but the utterances have a morning sweetness or an evening maturity, or a steady midday radiance that is all their own. It may utter itself in poetry or prose, it can respond to the moods and tenses of other minds leisurely, sympathetically, intuitively. But in response to everything it remains *itself*, self-poised, undisturbed and free. This mind may utter anything you like except a platitude.

2. There is the city mind (pardon the word for want of better), the city mind vibrating with its own life, and the life of the human race; eager, searching, unconventional, progressive. Think of the faces you see by hundreds under tall hats in the City, about the Bank of England and the Exchange at 1 p.m., and you will get a suggestion of the city mind. Think of the fixed eyes, and tense features, eyes that look straight before them, seeing nothing, for their gaze is within, features worn to wires by the interior pressure. Shall you hear platitudes from these? No; a platitude expires under pressure, and pressure is the element of the city mind. You will get facts, stripped of all their accessories to their severest elements; views chiselled to the hardest, smoothest surface; thoughts ground to a knife-edge, but never a platitude.

3. Thirdly, there is the true home of the platitude, the suburban mind. Solitude and pressure are equally far removed from it. Originality is choked by its villas, pressure is kept off by its efforts to be rustic. Its

milkmen, its butchers, its baker are all platitudes. These officials abound in suburban districts. They are *always* there. They suggest the most prosaic side of domestic life, without its joys, its sorrows or its heroisms. This is where the platitude is at home, where it luxuriates until it chokes you. You long for either town or country, for in suburban surroundings you aim at both and have neither; whereas the most pressed city mind may have its glorious moments of solitude; the most solitary mind its moments of intense superhuman pressure,—(take St. Paul, who knew the heights and depths of both)—and aiming at neither possesses both.

The use of the platitude:

Platitudes are not useless, they have an important function, active and passive, in conversational diagnosis. Passive, for we learn to know people, suburbans, by their platitudes. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Active, for a platitude serves as our troops would say to "draw the enemy's fire" and unmask their batteries. In fact, a platitude is often a conversational opening by which you feel the way to know your new acquaintance. Utter a platitude and watch the effect.

The city mind leaps at your throat and almost strangles you.

The rural mind looks beyond it, above it, beneath it, on each side of it, through it, every way except *at* it, and leaves you and your platitude high and dry together.

The suburban mind shakes hands with it, kisses it, small-talks to it, makes a fast friend and a confidant of it at once.

And thus you have your diagnosis.

Besides we must not say too much against platitudes, they have their honoured place in the world.

Longfellow, dear Longfellow, sometimes utters them.

Cowper and Dr. Watts live in them.

Mendelssohn plays them from time to time.

Carlo Dolce paints them.

Father Faber saves souls by them.

Truly we have platitudes always with us, but do not let us add unnecessarily to their number.

1900

ON "A THOUGHT THAT HAS STRUCK ME DURING THE YEAR."

It can only be an "*embarras du choix*" when we are asked for a thought that has struck us during the year. If we were told to keep note of a thought that had struck us during the *day*, and this order were renewed daily for the year, we should very rarely be obliged to make the melancholy entry, "a blank day."

This is one of the joys of Community life. The strongest, the sweetest, the most intimate thoughts of others are often flashed upon us unconsciously or trustfully put into our hands, and we go away richer in mind and heart, "wondering in ourselves at that which has come to pass" in these fleeting apparitions of Our Lord.

I know this has also its comic side, when, as Mother N. says, "you bring out your poor little thought, and all the microscopes of the Community are turned upon it in the same minute," but we can brave that for the

sake of the eyes that look through the miscroscope, "alive, alert, immortal," and bringing light as often as they ask for it. It is a greater ordeal when they come out with their spectroscopes, and our simple little ray of white light is broken up by spectral analysis into seven distinct coloured bands, each of which we must account for, though we never suspected its presence in the original light.

But here is my choice among the thoughts of the year. It came from the driest possible source, Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection." A paralysing title, by the way; think of aids to respiration read aloud, as a painless method of asphixiating criminals; the effect would be somewhat similar, for you can only truly reflect, when you do not reflect that you reflect, and so on.

"TRUTHS OF ALL OTHERS THE MOST AWFUL AND INTERESTING ARE TOO OFTEN CONSIDERED AS SO TRUE THAT THEY LOSE ALL THE POWER OF TRUTH AND LIE BEDRIDDEN IN THE DORMITORY OF THE SOUL SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE MOST DESPISED AND EXPLODED ERRORS."

This is dry, but it sets one thinking. Where do all our harvest of thoughts go to? Where are they stored? Where do they live? Where do they die? What becomes of them?

I visited six chambers in my own mind where these thoughts are distributed. It may be that others will find many more, indeed we know without allowing ourselves any personal allusions, that there are certain labyrinth minds, in whose mazes we scarcely trust our favourite thoughts for fear of losing them altogether.

First then, guided by Coleridge, I visited the interior crypt, cemetery or dormitory, since they are all much the same. In this catacomb or columbarium or dormitory I found all the "dear departed" thoughts ranged in their cells, identification being only possible by their inscriptions. "Little angel" thoughts, that died after two months' existence, during which I cherished them. I can smile over their graves. *Valete!* They were not "life thoughts." There is the cell of the thought that was to have made a saint of me, it seemed so full, so strong, as if I could never exhaust it. Yet it "wearied with the march of life," and I had to bury it by the wayside. R.I.P. Or perhaps it will make a saint of someone else, it was not meant for me.

Beyond it is the cell where rests the thought that died suddenly. A lightning flash of truth shrivelled it up. Let it rest and do not regret it.

There are the graves of orphan thoughts that died from neglect, but this is sad to touch upon, only as the wise people say, let us "call the attention of the authorities to the melancholy circumstance that a recurrence may be guarded against," and let us leave the crypt.

The second chamber is the museum, a sort of haunted place, between the dead and the living, the storehouse of all the curious thoughts, the original thoughts, the "happy thoughts," the singular suggestions, the thoughts that we wonder at for their origin, for their expression, for their first and last end, the far-fetched thoughts brought from the very Arctic regions by some intellectual Duke of Abruzzi. Here are set the stuffed lions we have received from the "wicked world" outside,

the "mental savage Africa"; the prehistoric mammoth of thought that was too big for me, so that I had to present it to the museum because I could not live with it; the reflections of primeval man that no one ever utters aloud in real earnest; the savage weapons and ornaments torn from wild thoughts that I met in the woods; shells and gems from all parts of the world that kind friends have sent to me. All these are in the museum, endless food for thought, and thoughtful talk with those kind friends, and the museum is a place where I can spend many a happy and useful hour; but these are curiosities only.

The third chamber is the forge, where the inner blacksmith works in the glow of his furnace, and in the sweat of his brow, beating out the hot thoughts upon his anvil; sometimes he is beating the swords into ploughshares, and the spears into spades, and sometimes the order is reversed, and he beats the ploughshares into swords, and the spades into spears, having considered "that God hates the peace of those He destines for war." Both in peace and war he hammers out his horseshoes with ringing blows on the anvil, horseshoes of unanswerable thoughts, each complete in itself, "*Quid hoc ad æternitatem?*" "*Tempus fugit, caelestia quaere,*" *Memento mori,*" and so on.

I like the blacksmith's forge. Here the will comes in search of strong thoughts with which to fight. There is sweetness elsewhere for the will, but here is only strength, so let us go there for ourselves; but when we want something for others let us go, where sweetness and strength are joined, to the fourth chamber, the goldsmith's workshop, where thoughts of price are

fused and beaten and chased into things of beauty. Historic gold-work was wrought here, the shield of Achilles, the ring of the Fisherman, the golden rose, all fruit of goldsmith's thought as well as goldsmith's craft. The golden words of the Poets are here, and the golden thoughts of the Saints. All thoughts that are both good and beautiful, the "altogether lovely" thoughts that have made the riches of our race, are stored here. It is well to spend hours with our goldsmith, and to bring from his workshop treasures new and old, according to our wealth, for the use and delight of others.

Next to the goldsmith's workshop is the library of the mind. Here all that is purest truth is gathered together. Not strength, not sweetness, but truth. White, colourless, passionless, enlightening truth, certain, positive, pure, luminous. Truth repellant to the foolish, the vain, and the insincere; attractive beyond resistance to the clear in mind and the pure of heart. Let us call it the library, for truth is often stored in books, but in reality the treasures of truth are diamonds of thought, hard, brilliant, cutting pitilessly through all that is baser, glorying in the light and glorifying it. Not every spirit knows their value, not even every *learned scribe*, but blessed are they that know it, "He that readeth, let him understand."

There is another chamber in the mind, which, repulsive as it is to some, is to me full of venerable and valuable stores. This is the *Office* of the mind, the home of all practical thoughts that make the machinery of "this lower world of ours" move on. It smells of leather-backed ledgers, it is spotted with ink,

and scattered over with samples, things of use, but scant in beauty. Here are treated questions of insurance and rent, of rates and taxes, of stocks and shares, of pipes and chimneys, of top-dressings and subsoils, of cattle and farm implements, of crops and cartage, of "cost" and "come to" and so forth. This is the home of abnegation, where reside those who are willing to treat of these things, and able to deal with them, and so they set others free to attend to stellar parallax and spectral analysis, the four Last Things and the degrees of mystical union.

All honour to them. All honour to those most necessary thoughts that make no show, nourish no pride, but call out all that is best of patience, abnegation and charity; yes, all honour to the thoughts of the Office.

But there are thoughts that will not go into any of these chambers, that are beyond the carving and the beating and the forging of the workshops, thoughts that have within them another life of their own. These are the thoughts of the supernatural order that transcend all the limits and the fetters, and the labels and the bottles, and the pigeon holes of the "Professors dry as dust."

A little living act of faith or hope or charity, escaping even from the trammels of words, a little leaning of my spirit on God, that carries it out and beyond itself to Him. These are like the flowers in the crannied wall of which Tennyson's little lines might have been spoken, and then his "higher Pantheism" and his "Flower in the crannied wall" would be Christian truth.

"Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here root and all, in my hand,
Little flower, but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

Tennyson.

1900

FROM PELEGRINA,—ABSENT, — TO THEOPHILA.

Almost at the end of my wanderings, Theophila, about to lay aside the "cockle hat and staff" and the "sandal shoon" of the journey, some thoughts occur to my mind, which, being out of proportion for an ordinary letter, are yet perhaps worth recording and reserving for a moment of leisure—*your* leisure, Theophila! though truly that is a word that makes me smile.

It became an obligation towards the end of my journey to take an account, by strict self-examination, of the various duties I had done or half done, or left undone, or given to others to do, or committed to the ground of my inner cemetery, in hopes of a happy resurrection, and to be done hereafter. In this self-examination, which the Psalmist not inaptly compares to the work of the broom, when he says "I swept out my spirit"—"scopebam spiritum meum"—amid a cloud of dust, the débris of various duties, which I carried off with damp tea-leaves of regret, there was found in the dust-pan a paper that reminded me of a neglected

duty—"*Never*" said my inward self-reproach, "*never*" did you set before Theophila the sum of your reflections concerning the Picturesque and the Clean, while she on her part, spinning and weaving night and day among her maidens, clothing the household in double garments, one for the mind and one for the body, and bringing them bread from afar, like the merchant ship, bread from the bake-house, and bread from the library shelves,—she has put you to shame. "Too late," I sighed, "bring me yet another tea-leaf to sweep up this fault, it is too late for anything but regret." Yet a better voice made itself heard within. "Better," said the voice, "is the fault acknowledged and repaired than the fault merely regretted; the living dog is better than the dead lion; better to live repentant than to die of shame. Write to Theophila, if not the sum, at least the summary of your reflections." After this preamble, Theophila, listen to the summary of my thoughts.

1. Is there peace or war between the picturesque and the clean? "Is there peace, John?" "What peace?" said the furious driver, "so long as, etc., etc." Is it hopeless war? irreconcilable, racial, religious war? I think *not*, Theophila, rather, a painful misunderstanding than war, a sort of "boundary question" like that which is in arbitration between Chili and the Argentine. You distrust the word "misunderstanding," Theophila? *so do I*, yet allow it for the moment. When the two are at variance, the picturesque appears to the clean inappropriate, lawless, unreasonable, reckless, incomprehensible; and the clean appears to the picturesque as aggressive, dictatorial, narrow, prejudiced, hyper-

scrutinizing. Neither can tolerate the other, but this is where they meet on ground that is not common to both, where each looks on the other as an invader, as, perhaps, it truly is. There are certain territories where they are at perpetual war, and others where they can live in peace.

To be more explicit: In youth, I believe, Theophila, that there must be war, peace comes with age. In earliest youth, put all the curls you wish on the little head, colour it with the fairness of the North or the riches of the South, yet if it is spotlessly, irreproachably clean, if you would call the nurse "a superior person" and the nursery maid "an admirable underservant," you may call the child "radiant," "beautiful" or "lovely," but you will not say "picturesque." Let the same child appear as "merit in rags" and "picturesque" is the first word that will spring to your lips. Think of one of Murillo's beggar boys, and one of Sir Joshua's dainty "demoiselles" and you have the type of each. Nurse calls him "a horrid dirty little beggar boy" and snatches away Mademoiselle, because Nurse is all for the clean. The Artist will be dragged both ways, but unless he be Sir Joshua will probably paint the beggar. "Immortalize the picturesque," he will say, "the clean can take care of itself." Yes, the clean *can* take care of itself, and it must take care of itself. "L'abandon is not its spiritual way."

In late youth the divergence is even more marked. To the clean, that which is "soigné," brilliant, sportsmanlike, choice, distinguished, (ah! yes, but their portion is also the faddy, the anxious, the German-water-cure, the hypochondriacal!) To the picturesque,

that which is rare, inspired, rapt, poetic. To the picturesque, the land of visions—(Yes, but for pity's sake, Theophila, keep them out of the Catholic School Committee, and don't let them loose in Parliament). But when they grow old, and the picturesque has dreamt its dreams out, and the clean has had some sharp falls —has "bought land," as we say when we see the stiff clay smitten into the sportsman's shoulders, has "bought experience" as we say in things of greater worth—then at last, they can make it up. The aged Prophet, the Seer, the Law-giver blends many things in one that have been antagonistic in young and middle life. He has the strength of judgment that more than ever masters our mind, with physical weakness that gives back the charm of childhood's dependence and makes it a joy to serve the old. (It is the very moment when such service can be graciously accepted, Theophila, that old age reaches its loveliness). So when the hair is whitened, the carriage a little less erect, the voice a little less sonorous, then, while losing nothing of its own, the clean can superadd the picturesque, and you find venerable, sweet and cultured old age.

And so in other things. The sharp, clear, architectural lines of the newly finished temple are clean, not picturesque. Give them the weathering of a few centuries, they have not lost the clean—(no, Theophila, I am not speaking of London, but of Greece or Rome),—but they have been coloured and clothed with the picturesque. But can the picturesque in old age superadd the clean, as the clean can superadd the picturesque? I fear not, Theophila, at least no instance of it comes to my mind, but then you know, rapt in vision, the

picturesque often saves the situation by dying young! Again the picturesque and the clean do not war against each other at a distance, only when brought into the foreground and narrowly examined. The clean, generally speaking, is only perceptible when near at hand. It bears and even courts inspection and analysis. I know you are thinking of London again, Theophila, but in the distance, even London smoke is haze, colour, veiling mystery, it is not dirt until you can lay your finger on it and bring it home as black dust to the senses of the inhabitants. The clean deals in the particular and the part, the picturesque in general effects. That is why the excess of the one is over-particularity and of the other negligence of detail.

2. This brings me to my second thought, Theophila, we can, we may, we ought, nay, we must strive for the clean. We *cannot*, *may* not, *ought* not, *must* not strive for the picturesque: "Nascitur non fit." The picturesque striven for, is the picturesque destroyed. You cannot prepare for it nor *organize* it. You see it, you feel it, know it is there; and it is there *or it is not* there. There are no portions or sections of it. It is entire or not at all. But the clean! Oh! think of it, Theophila, washing day, starching day, bleaching day, spring cleaning; the whole series of thoughts brings to our mind effort, oragnization, intelligent labour. Our warfare in this is indeed against flesh and blood. Ask Mother M., Theophila, let her tell her experiences, and say whether her life is not a daily conflict for the clean, and what she would think of a school in which rather the picturesque was cultivated in details of dress, and vestry organizations! "Ces dames Novices me font

bien assez be charades," sighed Sister C. with her hands full of crockery chips. The third division with its vivid personalities, exuberant movements, and opulent vitalities, gives Mother M. already more than enough of the picturesque.

Enough, Theophila, put the two face to face, let them fight it out in presence of the Community. Take a typical pair, Mother R. and Sister D. K. Let them consider the respective duties of the picturesque and the clean, to bear with one another, not to attack but rather to favour one another, to understand each other, to aim at each other as far as each can be aimed at, but if the aim is successful, to meet, not with the shock of lance thrusts, but with a religious embrace!

Poor and disconnected as these thought are Theophila, I submit them for your consideration—and with all dutiful feelings towards those that are clean, and all affectionate weakness for such as are picturesque, I am, as ever,

Your returning

PELEGRINA.

1901.

THE HUNT.

To the Editor of the Religious Sportsman.

Reverend Sir,—As you were good enough to print in your columns an article from my pen on the "moral virtues" steeplechase, I venture to enclose another contribution on a run I had with the hounds in the Vale of Tears some ten years ago, which may be of interest to some of your readers.

I am, Rev. Sir, yours truly,

A Lover of Sports and Seeker after Wisdom.

The meets were advertised last week as follows :

Monday : The White Hart.

Wednesday : Shuffler's cross roads.

Saturday : Roehampton Convent Spinney.

I consulted a friend who knew the country about these meets, for I was new to it. He told me that they generally got a good run from the White Hart, but my favourite horse was lame and the others could not go far in such a flying country. Shuffler's cross roads was a meet he could not recommend, the coverts were so close, it was like chasing the game in and out of a rabbit warren. I elected for the Convent Spinneys, always sure to hold a fox, and my horse was sound again before the end of the week.

I started early to avoid that rush to the meet with an expectation of being late, that is so trying to horse and rider. That quiet ride to cover, looking forward to a good run, is one of the best things of the day, and so it was on this occasion.

It was a soft May morning, though early in the season, blessed with a "southerly wind" that a huntsman proverbially loves, but not the corresponding "cloudy sky"—bright sunshine after rain; indeed, one of those balmy hunting days that lives in one's mind like a picture, with its tawny woods, its dripping fences and the grey November pastures. Half a mile or so out I came in with the hounds; the huntsman Right Reason was trotting gaily on before (they have strange names in this Vale of Tears country, Mr. Editor, for instance, they call the fox Happiness, as we call him Reynard), the hounds followed in capital order, whipped in by the two brothers Law. The name of the pack is "*Media ad finem*," they are big deep-mouthed hounds, short in the leg and long in the back like a certain Midland pack of heroic memory, steady goers too, not given to rioting after sheep or rabbits. The *Media ad finem* hounds attend strictly to business, and they are admirably hunted by Right Reason. He is a feature of the hunt, and so is his nephew Nat. Law, the first whip. Both have cool heads and even tempers, and are not stirred into intemperate language, even when a flock of sheep crosses the scent, or a kicking horse gets in among the hounds. They have hunted this pack for years, know every inch of the country, and where every fox has been found for the last twenty seasons.

I fall in next with a sportsman who is known to his friends by the name of Philosopher, and we jog on together. He is a walking encyclopædia of knowledge in the eyes of the hunt, and is a reference on all subjects, horse flesh, pedigrees (equine and human), topo-

graphy, local tradition, and that delicate question of "Who's who"—so necessary for a new member of a hunt. "Now tell me, Philosopher," I said, as we cantered over the last half mile, "who is who? We can see all the field from here?" "Look," he answered, "I will point them out as they stand; do you notice that man with the cut of a hard rider on a big chestnut horse? That is Mr. Golightly, he is one of the Passions, his mother's name was Irascible, and that is his favourite horse Daring—you will see some break-neck riding if you follow him. That odious cockney rider behind him is a man called Vain, nobody speaks to him, I believe he gets new pink and tops every season," continued the Philosopher with an air of contempt. "He is a relative of the Passions too, but of another branch of the family, and has no more of the sportsman about him than a squirt of rose water. Ah, there comes the Master, do you see him? His name is Mind." Yes, I saw him, he looked and rode as became an M.F.H., and was mounted, as he should be mounted, on a brown thorough-bred, combining such blood, bone and beauty as only the highest strains of English descent can show, and such manners and temper as only come out of the best stables. By his side rode his little girl, out with the hounds for the first time to-day, on one of those clever New Forest ponies that even high class hunters find it hard to beat. "What is the young lady's name, Philosopher?" "Miss Wilhelmina, I believe," he replied, "but I'm afraid her friends only call her Will." The old coachman Experience followed, riding Estimative, a wonderfully knowing horse that had seen some sixteen

seasons in this country, he was to be in charge of Miss Wilhelmina.

"Good morning, Heaviside," said Philosopher benignly, as we passed a picture of an old farmer on a rakish looking colt. "What is your mount to-day?" "Memory, sir," chuckled the old farmer with a wink, "I'm a-breaking of him for the Master, for the use of his young Master at college; he's a rare one to jump the places he's been over before." "Good point that," said the Philosopher carelessly, "but it won't take him far with the hounds if he is afraid of new places." A foreign Count passed us at a hard gallop to the Philosopher's great amusement. He was in full military uniform with some marvellous wind instrument coiled round his body on which apparently he meant to perform when he came up with the fox, he had also a brace of great pistols (like the farriers of a Yeomanry troop) at the side of his saddle. "That is Count Szederkezy," said my friend, "but as the natives can't pronounce his name they call him 'Eccentricity'; he is thought to be a little wanting in balance." "What kind of balance, Philosopher?" "All kinds of balance," said the lover of wisdom drily. "There is our poet," he continued with a laugh, "that is Imagination." Indeed he looked like a poet — a 19th century poet with a shock head of hair and a pensive absent countenance. He rode a graceful light-made horse named Asphodel, with rosettes of dead leaf colour at his ears—it was by no means a hunting get up! One more sportsman, and I have done. This is the hunting parson, white haired, white faced, thin as a lath, resting his hunting crop on his hip with an

easy air of being at home there, a strange iron-like ring in his voice that seemed to me to come from preaching a fossil creed for many years to a bucolic congregation. They say that in his young days he would often slip the surplice over the pink, when he had to perform a rustic wedding, while the groom walked his horse about at the churchyard gate, and that the villagers would say that it was "quite cheery-like to hear the clank of Parson's spurs on the church floor."

Now, however, he has given up the pink and hunts in black, but he is as keen a sportsman as ever. This morning he rode a weedy grey horse not too safe on his forelegs it seemed to me. "Well," said the Philosopher genially, "so you are out on Inconsistency again?" "Yes," said the Parson, in a semi-preaching tone, "he goes very well in this country, though he could not live in the shires." "What is his pedigree?" I ventured to ask, for the horse had a curious false air of blood about him. "Muscular Christian," "Tory Squire," "Queen Anne," "High and Dry," "Church and State," said the Parson in a satisfied tone, checking the animal as he stumbled over a drain, "he has very often put me down when his forelegs give way, but I'm fond of him all the same." "I hope we shall find early," he added, "for I have to be back at four to read the Commination service." Now I, being a Catholic, did not know what the Commination service meant, but on enquiry from my encyclopædic friend I found that it was a series of curses which are directed to be read aloud from time to time by the established Clergy to their flocks for mutual edification and

comfort. "Is there a curse," I asked, "for the man who leads his neighbour into error?" "No, my dear boy," answered the Philosopher, "it deals with what they call practical matters. Error is a detail."

But here we are at the meet. Hodge Sense, a grinning rustic in a smock frock is telling Right Reason "that he see'd Happiness an hour ago steal into Colonel Lovejoy's poultry yard," and Right Reason is shaking his head dubiously. Sanction, the keeper, is explaining to Nat. Law how he had stopped all the earths this morning and given a poacher into custody for the Petty Sessions. At last the hounds are put into covert. There are some minutes of breathless suspense. Cool old hands venture to get down to let out their curb chains or look at their girths, nervous ones ride anxiously up and down. Mind is giving his little lady Will into the custody of Experience, the old coachman, who is proud of the charge, the rest are in silence.

All at once a piercing "View, Hallo!" is heard at the far side of the Spinneys. "Happiness, Happiness —Go-o-on aw-a-y," shouts Right Reason. The hounds stream out of covert with a deep musical note that stirs the very marrow of our bones. "Stole awa-a-ay" echoes the first Whip, again cracking his long lash after a solitary straggler. The Poet, in an ecstasy of delight, throws back his head to repeat the View Hallo, puts his hand to his mouth and—utters a coo like a pigeon—at which the old farmer Heaviside is taken with such a fit of laughter that he nearly rides over the straggling hounds. Such a rush as it is, that first five minutes from the covert-side, before the ardour of the cockneys

has been cooled. The ground seems to shake under the trampling of those many hundred hoofs. The horses not yet steadied in their stride are pulling double and plunge wildly at the first fence. Now we have cleared it, and let who can keep hold of his horse's head on the fair forty acres of grass. "Gently, gentlemen, gently, don't ride the hounds," says Right Reason entreatingly, as the Count, the Poet, and the Cockney almost plunge into the pack. The two latter rein in their mounts—but the Count thinks he has caught sight of the fox. He—yes—he will show the Englishmen the sport—he will kill—"le gibier" before the "dogs" have mutilated it—*he* will see that it is served for Miss Wilhelmina's supper to-night—and in a moment he has drawn one of the great pistols and stands up in his stirrups to steady his fire. What tragedy might have followed will never be known, if his horse had not fortunately put his foot in a water furrow and Count Eccentricity, as the natives call him, not being well balanced in his saddle, rolled on his back in the soft-ploughed land, condemning in expressive terms the ways of English sport. "Good riddance," muttered Right Reason temperately, "can't get on with them eccentricities, anyway."

Oh! this is something like hunting, the scent breast high, the hounds running so that you could cover them with a table cloth, the big bull-finches frowning at you, making you take your heart in both hands and trust to Providence for what may be at the other side, and the broad Vale before without a covert within miles.

The farmers have locked every gate in the line of course, so it means jumping in good earnest, and one by one the less serious riders drop off.

The Master keeps close to his hounds and Right Reason by his side. "Forrard, forrard, forrard on," he cries encouragingly, and the gallant pack quicken the pace, just too fast this time; they have overrun the scent and come to a check.

How these twenty minutes have weeded the field! The little lady is up, all honour to her and her pilot—so are old Heaviside and Mr. Golightly. The Parson too, and the Poet, will be able to pick up again thanks to this check; the Philosopher and I have the good luck to be there, the rest are nowhere. Right Reason takes a moment for circumspection, then rides carefully out among the hounds. Two or three casts are fruitless, Golightly looks impatient—then an old hound hits off the scent, a low musical whimper, the pack are on it, we are off again, the pace as great as before. It cannot last long now—we shall kill in the open undoubtedly, but who will be there when we come up with Happiness? Memory has refused a flight of hurdles, so poor old Heaviside is turned out. Imagination is struggling among the thick thorns, and the graceful Asphodel shows that he has had enough of it. The Parson has held his own gallantly, but Inconsistency cannot live over timber; a stern fence of syllogisms has brought him down, and the old sportsman rides home with a muddy back but ready to make all manner of excuses for his old favourite.

Now comes the tug-of-war, the horses are getting blown and all in a lather. The hounds still running

almost at view. Right Reason is standing up in his stirrups leaning right over his horse's neck. The Master's magnificent thoroughbred even is covered with foam, but spirit and temper as good as ever; the country grows stiffer for every fence we take. Here looms the blackest of all untrimmed thorns, strong with the growth of fifty years, not a gap anywhere, and the suspicion of a big ditch on the landing side. It is neck or nothing now, the great crisis of the day. Right Reason shows the way, and like the loyal servant that he is, turns to look for the Master. He holds up his hand, and we know that the landing must be dangerous, for Right Reason never gives sign for a trifle. What matter! the Master follows without moving a line in his saddle. Mr. Golightly comes next—the chestnut rushing madly at the fence. "Lady," cries Right Reason imperiously as he sees little Miss Wilhelmina facing her pony at the obstacle. But Mr. Golightly has lost control of his fiery chestnut, who has chafed all day and now has the bit in his teeth; he cannot stop, and comes down as he deserved, a royal crash, and horse and rider roll over and cool themselves in the muddy ditch water. "Will you take it, Missy?" shouts old Experience, half frightened, "or will you go round?" but the child's courage is up and she does not even answer; shortening her reins in both steady little hands she puts her pony resolutely at the big fence with a cut of the whip. He gives a wince and a snort and lays back his wicked ears, but a New Forest never knows when he is beaten: a splendid take off, an obstinate scramble, a few moments breathless suspense for those who look on—it takes longer to

write than to live through it, and pony and rider land safe over the formidable obstacle, a little paleness and a few honourable scratches are all the damage there is to show for such a brilliant beginning.

But the Hounds have brought us to the finish now; a who-whoop from the whips, a burst of music from the hounds, and Right Reason dashes in holding the quarry above their heads for a moment, then all is over. The well-won brush is fastened to the head of Miss Wilhelmina's pony, two or three plaintive notes on the horn, and we turn our heads homewards.

They say that Mrs. Prim, the nurse, made a great fuss at that "nasty vermin" being brought into the nursery, but Miss Wilhelmina declared that she would not sleep unless the brush was fastened up over her little bed, and she had her way.

Now she was a lady much given to reflection, and the following day she asked her brother's tutor what was real happiness, for she knew that Happiness was only a pet name for a fox; and he being properly brought up in the principles of the schools, answered that "Happiness was the bringing of the soul to act according to the habit of the best and most perfect virtue of the speculative intellect, borne out by easy surroundings and enduring to length of days," and pondering carefully upon those words she conceived the idea that she was only at the beginning of some great truth, and hearing her brother painfully translating, with many sighs, some words from St. Augustine that seemed to him incomprehensible, she noted them carefully. "Oh, happy blessedness and blessed happiness, to see the Saints, to be with the Saints,

to be as the Saints, to see God, to possess God for all Eternity and beyond it! This let us muse upon with all our understanding. This let us pant for with all our desires, and we shall soon be there. If you ask how this should be, by whose merit and with whose help? Listen. This matter is placed in the power of him who will do it, for the Kingdom of God suffereth violence. The Kingdom of Heaven, O man! asks no other price than thyself, it is worth to thee as much as thou art thyself. Give thyself and thou shalt have it. Why dost thou dispute about the price? Christ gave Himself that He might purchase for thee the Kingdom of His Father. Give thyself therefore that thou mayest be His Kingdom, that sin may not reign in thy mortal body, but the life-giving Spirit." It seemed to him incomprehensible, for he was a boy! but to her it seemed that she had got some further insight into the great truth, and ten years later at the age of eighteen, coming to a practical understanding of the matter, she laid aside her riding habit and decided to become a nun, and I hear, Mr. Editor, that she took the veil this morning at Roehampton.

1902

THE CLOSED GARDEN.

It might be the heading of a meditation, the title of a book of devotion, the name of a picture with a number in an exhibition catalogue, the designation of a sermon by St. Bernard or—the description of your own soul.

Somebody wrote a romantic book on "My Lady's Garden" with a good deal of nonsense in it, and another wrote a book on "A Surrey Garden," with a good many dashes of sense across the nonsense. And this brings to my mind that gardeners are not usually taken seriously; a man who spends his life on gardening is not generally considered a man of weight or purpose, unless like Sir Joseph Paxton, he has risen from the ranks and sat down as a master-Gardener among the princes of the people,—and annoyed the lay-folk of the craft by certain arbitrary changes in the nomenclature of cultivated plants. In that case he represents authority, professional skill, expert opinion, the right to be heard, and a certain little vexatious horticultural tyranny before which we bow rather stiffly. Otherwise a gardener is considered an amiable sort of dilettante, with elegant and expensive tastes, a member of a small and very select school of artists.

But is gardening an art? I see you shudder already. You think you are going to be dragged over the harrows of an old controversy long worn threadbare, like the introduction to logic: "Is logic a science or an art?" Not at all. I only appeal to the verdict of your common sense when you look at the newest show

chrysanthemum, the last "improved" carnation, the latest columbine which has no less than six doves drinking at its fountain. These are artistic productions of the gardener are they not? Not *made*, but *educated* out of the simple forms of wild flowers—"for beauty and for glory," and for delight.

But to return to the closed garden. What was it? "*Un jardin potager?*" the "garden of pot herbs" of our great-grandmothers, or in our own phrase the kitchen garden? No, the kitchen garden is like certain points in a meditation, "good, desirable, becoming, necessary," but it is not delightful, and the raison d'être of the closed garden is delight.

Therefore also it is not a market garden, for the end of the market garden is early produce; not even a nursery garden, for the end of the nursery garden is transplantation, neither of which are ends worthy of the "closed garden."

What then is the "closed garden?" It is the enclosure within the enclosure, the very heart of the estate. The closed garden must not border upon the great thoroughfare, but be bounded on all sides by the freer parts of the domain. It borders on the slope of its own park, so that through its latticed gates you may see the deer browsing far away under the oaks; one of its side-doors opens into the plantations not far from the game-keeper's cottage, and another side borders on the miniature lake where you flatter yourself that you will rear wild-fowl. Vain hope! for *one* comes out of the plantation by night, and shamelessly steals brood after brood, and rejoices in the evil,

knowing that his sacred life is protected by law against all enemies,—except foxhounds. And the other wall has its side-door on a garden path, the wild path of an English garden, silent and shady and secluded from all but those that have the entry of the closed garden.

And the closed garden is for delight—delight of the Creator, delight of the owner, delight of the gardener, delight of the few,—the *very* few, that on the invitation of the rarest friendship may tread its paths. Now do you understand?

The closed garden is your own soul of course—you saw that from the beginning. In the very heart of your heart, and soul of your soul, there is an enclosure wall, the closed garden. There is a great deal outside it that is worth visiting, and which you, if you are a philanthropist, throw open to the public on certain holidays, and we all go in and picnic under your trees, and rouse up your deer, and take delight in all the sights and sounds of the rich park land; that is to say, when you throw open your holiday thoughts to us and let us see some of the bright imaginative live things that course through your head. In other times of course the park gates are shut, and the family is in town, when parliament is sitting and *you* are in your place in the House, demonstrating to an astonished audience how the Education Bill works out upon real live children; that is what we call "term time," and we know what it means!

And when, admitted by your genial philanthropy we wander round from the park into the plantations, we

find your property still. That is where, sacred and retired, you preserve your foxes. We can guess at the glorious runs that there will be next season when some of these cherished cubs have grown to fox's estate, and break away from these secluded coverts, and the hunt streams across the vale and all of us are in the first flight with the hounds.

And this little lake with the water-fowl on it? Ah! those are the joys that *might have been*, if it had not been for the exigencies of fox-hunting; the gentle joys of verse writing, and high class sample making, backed on a leisurely classical culture and musical formation in good church tones, and desultory holy reading, and ideal leisure, and all those things that are considered conventional delights—things that might have been, but may not be, because, as I said above, of the stern necessities of fox-hunting.

And that secluded, winding path, what of that? The wood pigeons call to each other across it and the jays chatter in the tops of the spruce, and your friends walk below and wonder what manner of closed garden may lie at the end of this walk where their feet fall so noiselessly on the fallen spruce needles or on the deep moss of the borders, for you are too large-hearted to say "keep off the grass" here, as the cockney proprietors do.

But the closed garden; who has the key of the closed garden? Nobody knows, except those who have it, and the one who gave it. And no one knows what lies within it. But we guess at that.

There is the sun-dial on which the silent, unerring needle marks the morning and the evening and the

noon-day, and the hour when the Creator comes down and walks there with His creature, the hour of the morning sacrifice, or in the "afternoon air," which seems to have been from of old the hour for contemplation.

There are day-lilies growing there, holy, lovely thoughts, born of God, given for a day only, for delight and for a foreshadowing of what the lilies shall be that will never fade away.

And there are immortelles in the closed garden, thoughts that even now are everlasting, that time and age and change can never touch, bright enough to lay upon the holy graves of our dead.

And violets are there, great Czar violets, our "prize essays" of humility, hidden away under their own leaves; we can only cultivate them in the most cloistered walks of our closed garden; and pansies, true "pensées," grave and full, so broadly open, so deeply delightful to those that understand the beauty of pansies, and all other thoughtful flowers. Shade of Sir Joseph Paxton! their names are quite beyond you, St. Francis of Sales can tell us more about them than you can, "le serpolet et le thym qui croissent au pied et à l'ombre de l'arbre de la vie."

Perhaps the less said the better of all the rest of what is in the closed garden.

"He could not trust his melting soul
But in his Maker's sight."

And when we give the key, we give it in trust and trembling, only to those whom the Creator has sent to us, his commissioned gardeners, or near and trusted

spiritual kinsmen that come from Him, or that rare friend, one in ten thousand, to whom we make, as Bacon says, a "civil shrift"; the one who knows us better than ourselves.

But you know there are other closed gardens, and the strange thing is that you can learn about them only inside your own.

There is the closed garden of our Blessed Lady where the One Flower grew from the One Flower, the Rose from the Lily, the garden of the True Vine; and that other closed garden on Olivet, of which the Lord and Owner offers us the key, and allows those who will make use of it to walk with Him therein amid the Olives and the Passion Flower.

1902.

A SPECIMEN OF THE THOUGHTS OF 1903.

An October corn market in a country town had a stamp of its own before the agricultural depression set in over England. Farmers are now rooted and confirmed in the idea that there is something hopelessly wrong somewhere, occult in its causes and crushing in its results, so that there is little spirit left in them. But in those days there were men of "light and leading" among the Midland agricultural folk, and there was a pardonable pride in bringing forward two or three of those little bags which contain corn samples, with a knowledge that they would secure the attention of buyers and the favourable comments of other

growers. There was a certain elation, too, in driving to market in a dog-cart behind the showy four-year-old that was meant to figure in the meets of the next season, if the wheat sold well.

This is our New-year's Corn Exchange. We have met with our samples from the harvest of 1903, and there are growers of promise and enlightenment among us, untouched by agricultural depression; let us see what they have brought. "Bright, heavy, clean," those are the approving words that go round the agricultural circles as each sample is handled, we shall probably use the same words, or the equivalent, as the samples of the year's thinking are handed round. Some of the farmers bring true wheat, red or white, with high-sounding names that carry us back to the palmy days of wheat growing after the Peninsular War. Others "Chevalier" barley, that brings an echo of "the '45" or "Black Tartarian" oats, showing that *someone* at least knows what comes from Central Asia.

Now what have you brought, growers of the Thames valley district, agriculturists of the London clay. Don't be offended at being likened to farmers. God Himself has called Himself a husbandman. "*Pater meus agricola est.*"

Here is mine, and I labelled the sample bag after an old favourite variety—"Talavera wheat, grown in a home county." It opens with a renunciation of what I have often maintained—*confiteor* it is good to begin with this. I have often said that your thought could be expressed in words if only you were

attentive enough, or painstaking and laborious enough, or enlightened and educated enough, or provided with sufficiently good dictionaries to find them. I renounce and abandon this theory. "Not in dialectics has it pleased the Lord to save His people," said St. Ambrose centuries ago, and man cannot rescue his thought in words any more than the Lord can save His people in logic. Language carries his thought,—but too often must carry it as a bullock train in South Africa must carry a statesman, Cecil Rhodes let us say, a precious life. An unwieldy carriage sticking fast in the mud, breaking down at the fords, hopelessly stayed by the obstinacy of the team. The statesman is unworthily borne along, slowly and heavily. If he reaches his journey's end safely, it is much; if he is only exhausted and delayed, not shattered, it is all that he can hope for. To return to the thought and the word. In Community a young Aspirant makes a deep remark. It has cost her, we hope, days of thought and perhaps minutes of anguish before she uttered it in the best chosen words she could find. But at last there it is. Then we know what happens. If the Community is in full holiday force, this young and deep remark is playfully caught up by a Professed and volleyed across the Community to someone who is supposed to be like-minded. This one responds to the challenge and proceeds to explain the remark. Before the original Aspirant is able to make herself heard, to protest that she never meant anything so wise, the original remark has been labelled, catalogued, indexed, and reported, reviewed, annotated, and prefaced, and dedicated and edited in two or three editions; then translated into two or three languages,

and summarised or perhaps published in an abridged and expurgated edition for the special use of the young by Sr. M. Then it has been scratched with a *nihil obstat* by the young Professed and received the *imprimatur* of the old Professed and gone out into the world bearing at least ten more meanings than the one it originally bore, and the bewildered author recognises "that every one of them is right." For all the time the meaning has been coming out all round, if the thought has any real value, a future in it, as we say, spreading out beyond the phrases and the words,—and we are awed at moments by seeing that we have said more than we knew; and we can understand about the

"Words made musical by poets dead,
In which the fulness of all meaning lies
Sweetening and gathering sweetness evermore,"

—and how a poet may grow up to understand his own best lines with wonder how he wrote them—half comprehending.

And then we understand Cardinal Newman's "illative sense," and wonder why the Thomists should denounce and scout the idea of its existence. Do they not own it themselves under another name? Estimative or cogitative, call it what you will, but there it is, the faculty of insight—in spiritual things, the virgin sight, the virgin step of John "Divine" not to be outrun by the heaviness of reason and sense-experiment, not to be hoodwinked, trammelled or deceived. In the high principles of human things an almost prophetic intuition. "So it is, or so it is not, I know not why,

but so it is or so it is not." Truly an illative sense bearing swiftly and safely over the thin ice, too swiftly to be engulfed; the ice way would not bear if the mind rested for a moment, but the end is reached in safety. A "woman's faculty," they say, and why not? Woman was the last step in creation, not man. If he has it he inherits it from his mother, and many a gracious gift is thus inherited. But this field is getting too wide for an essay; at any rate, it will not come out of the same sample bag. Let us come to practical suggestions.

1. Trust the illative sense or whatever you call the corresponding faculty and take for granted much that it shows. (*How much* depends on you.) Don't pickaxe thin ice in front of you, but keep moving; if you want to use a pickaxe go to the quarries, revel in mathematics, glory in logic, but do not come near with that profane tool to the sanctuaries of love and belief. Trust the sense and skim lightly; beyond, you will reach the strong ice again.

2. Take for granted much in other people that will not bear close examination. Take for granted people's obvious meaning, obvious to your illative sense, obscure perhaps to your reason. This is an exercise of intellectual charity and good manners. It means, look more to the spirit than to the flesh, and even more it means, judge of things in their *wholeness*, not in their parts; but this is a canon that has such wide application that again it would go beyond the limits of one sample bag.

(Pedagogical note: This does not apply to the tuition of children, from whom we are bound to exact serious efforts to be lucid and accurate).

3. Don't look your fundamental notions too hard in the eyes, there too "*take them for granted*" and own their prescriptive right of possession unless some voice as authoritative as the Archbishop's in a Pastoral, or as normal as the collective vote of the Community or your religious Superiors in direction, tell you that they are all wrong and need reconstruction from their very foundations; otherwise do not pull down the house about your ears. Up to a certain distance an object grows clearer if brought nearer to the eye, after that it is blurred, so for fundamental notions, don't go too near, it spoils the focus, keep them at the right distance, that is the normal.

4. Last and most serious advice. Never give up trying to express your meaning although you know that you never can. It is one of those efforts doomed to failure that are nevertheless some of the best things in life; always nearer to your meaning, always better, but never *there*, never complete. It is of these impossibilities that our best achievements are born. Self-satisfaction dwarfs our growth. It is the great, striving, idealising discontent that feeds the flame of thought and aspiration, and for us, the sacred fire of advancement in religious perfection.

So to tie up my sample as the farmer does before his friends the growers, and the corn-merchants and the dear dusty millers,—my sample of the year's thought is, the reality and value of the illative sense.

ON THE PRACTICAL SPIRIT.

I asked myself whether the subject was too hackneyed, whether it had been exhausted, but on reflection it seems worthy of a separate paper, for we have all an intimate persuasion that we have not reached the bottom of it. We remember the time when we looked into it together, and determined to become practical. We gazed intently at the practical spirit, we stretched ourselves beyond measure, we jumped ever so high, and we alighted with our feet almost in the same position as before. Nothing more was said about it for some time. Some became practically unpractical from aiming at the unattainable; others unpractically practical by aiming at something which was not to the point.

Perhaps there is a "more excellent manner" if we could find it. We were determined then to begin with the Concrete. Everyone begins with the concrete now; it is the new educational fad. And perhaps it would be the royal way to become practical if we had scope and time to develop in that way, time to experiment, to burn our fingers, to expiate our awkwardness and our mistakes, to begin indefinitely over and over again,—in a word, two or three lives at our disposal, instead of the remains of one.

Our mistake was principally this,—that we mistook the material for the practical; and then we began anywhere, and not only outside, but *from the outside*; we rode gallantly forward without knowing where we were going,—and as they say in war, "without any

definite objective." But now we are wiser. We recognise that the practical, like the glory of the King's Daughter, "sits in the inner chamber, backed against the wall." The practical spirit rules from the inner court and is not necessarily seen in the streets. . . . . Perhaps for once, as we are all grown up, as we are feeling the pressure of urgency, as we are most willing to be convinced, we might begin at the other end, and laying down what we think to be the idea of the practical spirit, consider how we may best develop it in the special conditions of our life. Shall we assume this—that it (the practical spirit) is "*Sound sense applied from the lowest to the highest things of life.*" It is not shown in learning to make puddings, or in icing cakes; it would not matter very much if cakes were never iced again by any one of us. Nor does it lie in getting up an Encyclopædia-ful of material details. It is not found in learning up other people's business which we may never be called upon to transact. It is not proved by a superficial acquaintance with a number of useful facts. A hunger and thirst for these alone shows a mind practically unpractical, it is a beginning made at the wrong end. Facts are eminently useful, but an accumulation of facts is not practical knowledge, it is *invertebrate*, and practical knowledge requires a backbone. Further, a practical spirit is not a matter-of-fact, unimaginative type of mind, circumscribed by material conditions and delighting in them, far from it, but of this hereafter in examples.

Practical spirit is an attitude of mind, a point of view, a manner of judging and deciding, much more than a department of knowledge.

How, then, does it show itself in our life? I suggest these six marks among others for your consideration:

Study the people who carry things through.

Study the people who always fall on their feet.

Study the people who take nothing amiss.

Study the people who make themselves generally useful and hold themselves cheap.

Study the people who take every occurrence as a matter of course.

Study the people who keep to the point.

Partly gift and partly virtue, happy disposition or precious training; sweet reasonableness inborn, or hardly-won unselfishness; sternness of schooling or native adaptability,—industry, training or genius,—these have gone to make it up. If they had not genius they had training, if they had not training they had industry, and this at least is within the reach of all. Now learn by contraries and consider the contrasting types:

Those who fail you in an emergency or in the long run.

Those who are for ever in catastrophes.

Those to whom the grasshopper is a burden.

Those who are always surprised at the turn of events.

Those who are diverted from the point by details or accidental interests.

In these cases it is sufficient to suggest the points for consideration without further development.

The most interesting part of the question remains,—the means to acquire, as far as it can be acquired, a practical spirit.

No particular prescriptions can be given, it is a case of régime, rather than of drugs. In general cultivate the open eye, the hearing ear (both much harder than you would think), an observant habit of mind, a careful memory, an accurate way of speaking. Neglect no opportunity of listening, and classify the knowledge thus acquired. Remember, too, that it is a trust, not a personal possession, so do not be lighthearted about losing it.

Cultivate the wish to learn, rather than the wish to be taught. Be determined to "*pick up*" and do not wait for the Professor and the pedagogical devices of his craft. This illustration is recommended to young students of the English language. Do not think that lessons will do it, if you wait for lessons you will wait a life-time. Seize a word here, an idiom there, use the one you learned yesterday, experiment with the one you have just heard, rightly or wrongly; *use* is what you want, not teaching. The same may be said of other branches of knowledge. If we wait to be taught we shall never learn. If Livingstone and others of his type had waited to be taught to read, they might have died without having learned it.

Try to render all possible service to others, not talking of the thing, but doing it. If you are known to be a person who loves to serve, many opportunities will come in your way, to your great inconvenience perhaps, but to your far greater profit and instruction; be a cheap person.

Study and imitate good models in common life.

And for your further consideration and admiration

let me suggest three high types to show what the practical mind allied to genius or virtue can rise to :

John Sebastian Bach, so radiant in the sincerity of his art, so true, consistent, convinced and convincing, —practical in that he sends you back to your duty without a doubt in your mind, cleared, braced and steadied, stronger and abler *to act*, that is the practical note—that is the practical mind in music.

Shakespeare, the master of the *real*, teaching us that which *is* and leading us to that which ought to be, giving us experience gathered from human life and making for all that is soundest, most whole and honourable in human nature.

Solomon's "valiant woman" who needs no panegyric beyond the strong, terse sentences in which he drew her portrait : "She will render him good and not evil all the days of her life. She hath sought wool and flax and wrought by the counsel of her hands. . . She hath looked well to the paths of her house and hath not eaten her bread idle. . . . Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates."

1903.

EXPRESSION.

Informal Thoughts.

The tendency of our age is to self-analysis, and even to a morbid and inordinate craving for self-knowledge. We have gone many miles since it was written that the "proper study of mankind is man." We now think that the proper study of mankind is *self*. We photograph it, project it, paint it, write about it, we finger its pulse to test the degree of its emotion, and keep the thermometer under its tongue to register the intensity of its feelings. Only the healthier minds refrain from dissecting it without stopping to get an order for a *post mortem*.

But with all this analysis, I believe we know less about self, and certainly less about others, than if, with quiet temper and free mind, we—whole and entire—took self,—whole and entire,—and dealt with it in a manner best proportioned to its real position in the world.

We are in a phase of reaction against crude objectivism, soon the pendulum will swing back, there are already indications that it is doing so. Or perhaps we are like inexperienced divers in deep water, nearing the bottom of the plunge, and hoping that our breath will hold out until we come up again.

The breathlessness and morbidness are the symptoms that make us anxious about what the medical officer would call "the case," as to whether the patient can pull through or not. But as we are in the thick of the epidemic ourselves, it is for us to see how we can improve the sanitary conditions of things.

How shall we restore the morbid, introspective eye to its normal usefulness. Let us try an old-fashioned, simple remedy, "air and exercise," no treatment, no diet, no surgical operations, but let it have fair play out of its own doors, and reasonable use. Put away the spectacles and miscroscope, and all the optical instruments, and then "a-hunting we go," observing those around us instead of chemically analysing ourselves indoors.

At this juncture a prize essay was proposed on "*Expression*," but I had to give the prize, so I could not compete for it, but must write, as the Rule says, "in the interests of truth alone." Therefore, in taking air and exercise I set out on an observing expedition in search of expression.

I sought it first on the faces I knew least, that I might disengage my mind from what I knew to be there, lest I should fancy that I saw it. But I found that each face was a palimpsest, and bore three if not four manuscripts, written one over the other.

First the type, the racial story, written ineffaceably on the parchment. This is where we read the instincts, the affinity to fire or clay, to the god or to the beast, and this is the expression of the whole head, and answers to the question: "What art thou?"

Secondly the temperament, the story of destiny. Born to command or to obey, born to give or to receive, to carry or to be carried. Born in short, to sing first or second in the great chorus of life. And this is expressed in the profile at rest, and answers to the question: "What wouldst thou?"

Thirdly, the character written in eleven letters of passion on the features prepared by the temperament; and this is coming nearer to the true expression of the soul, for it is coming within the region of control. The eleven letters shape themselves into many words, and the soul of the one within often betrays itself by these utterances. But they are not its normal utterance; they are the expression of the soul suffering; suffering panic, depression, anger, or an invasion of joy which has routed the guards, and threatened the control of the whole castle of the soul. And these are read in the full face in agitation, and answer to the question: "What aileth thee?"

Fourthly, and this is the most intimate observation of all. When the countenance is in repose and fully turned to the observer, unconscious of itself, and following its own thoughts, then comes the true expression, the impress of subtle personal quality through the features, the most intimate seal and what is most inward and special to the soul in thoughts and views and interior life. This is the very "*Ego*" showing itself, the mind on the forehead, the thought in the eyes, the will in the mouth, the mood in the indefinable *something*, which you catch, but cannot hold; and this answers to the question that we hardly dare ask one another: "Who are you?" a question at which we sometimes make a hazardous guess, and seal our lips tight lest it should escape us before the time. Our highest friendships are staked on these hazardous guesses and silent understandings. By these I mean the friendships that are all of admiration and live in the ideal, not the prosy give and take of good offices, still

less those that are exacting of affection, but the friendship in which our best self calls out, and the ideal other answers. "How timely then a comrade's song comes floating on the mountain air," even though we should not be able to catch the words; and we are raised higher by what we have seen, by what we have guessed, and by what, in glowing consciousness, we believe to be there. These high friendships are not limited to earth, we may have our friends among the saints, canonized, or uncanonized of the heavenly city. When our inner self has caught the expression of their countenance looking at us, and we know that we understand and are understood then we may call them friends. They who have gone beyond the need of voice or spoken language, can understand us better even than those with whom we hold converse here, and they bend so nobly and sweetly down to us, that their gracious friendship, as all high friendships must do, lifts us above our own level and nearer to themselves.

Pardon this digression on friendship, I am not trying for the prize.

Expression in faces is only a very small part of our field of observation. There is expression in music and painting, expression in voice, in gesture, in writing, in a thousand human things. But there are dimmer and more hidden expressions in things that have no soul, and not everyone can catch them. For instance, what is the expression of a landscape? Something that can be caught, but cannot be communicated. A cockney critic said to a painter, was it Turner? in face of one of his pictures that seemed to him exaggerated, "I

never saw a sunset like that." "Don't you wish you could see it?" answered the painter grimly. The landscape is something inexpressive in itself, that catches a reflection from my thought, and throws back a subtle something to me, something that is partly *it* and partly *me*, and if you are standing by, it gives you back another subtle something that is partly *it* and partly *you*, and if you happen to be Turner, and I happen to be Hobbema, we shall talk together at cross purposes, if we try to make each other understand what we have seen. Which is another indication that we are hermit spirits.

And as I am not writing for the prize, which would demand unity of treatment in an essay, let me add a remark quite at a tangent. It was only on thinking it out, that I saw with some dismay, that the alternative essay proposed was only a collateral branch of the same subject, and an occult way of putting the question "How do you catch the expression in words." And this is a most seriously compromising question, because it induces you to lay bare the pegs on which your favourite thoughts and theories are hung, and all the theories and thoughts may be hanging up on them at the time and thus exposed to view.

Having got so far I may as well finish the confession. Some of my favourite words are :

Strenuous, a deep blue word, which expresses to me high pitch, and well-conditioned energy, clear and lofty thoughts.

Patient, a violet-coloured word, in which beyond the precious central meaning, I see fringes of delicate

beauty round the soul that is arrayed in the virtue of patience.

Serene, a word of clear cerulean blue, like a well washed sky after a storm, or the majesty of death in old age.

Renaissance, the colour of the word is Sister W's. favourite alitzarin crimson, and its expression that of abundant life, expectation and promise.

None of these words can leave me indifferent, but if I went on to those that are more intimate, I might as well make my direction aloud, and as no one would give me a prize for this, there is nothing to make it worth while.

1904.

A PARABLE FROM NATURE.

A discontented child stood gazing blankly into a garden. It was the old story: "*You must*," "*I wont*"—"*you ought*," "*I shan't*"—"*you shall*," "*I will not*!" But a more acute phase than usual had been reached, for instead of one of the interlocutors being without and one within, both were now within. It was I who said "you must," and it was I also who replied "I will not." When matters were at such a complete deadlock—when one is twelve years old, and finds oneself a failure, where can help come from? This time it came from the garden itself.

A long musical sigh arose from the garden. You might have thought it was a breeze from the south, or it might have been the concerted hum of two or three

thousand bees,—but the child understood it, and it was *words*. "I was common clay," said the garden, "until the roses were planted in me." This was a fact obviously true. The two champions inside stopped fighting. The fact went in and took possession.

Common clay,—heavy, lumpy, uniform, lifeless, dull and uninteresting; rugged in the dry season, slippery in the wet; turning both sun and rain to bad account, --vexatious to the owner, wholly undesirable.

Yet the clay had possibilities. The owner was a lover of roses, the gardener was an enthusiast, and between them the roses must grow. But who shall describe the preparatory troubles? The ground had not even the honour of being ploughed, it was *dug*, and dug again,—turned over, down to the subsoil,—and tney shook their heads over that. It was picked for stones, forked to eradicate colt's foot, raked to clear it of weeds. Its natural products were condemned,—its docks and dandelions pointed to neglect,—couch and carnation grass suggested want of training,—somebody thought they saw rushes in one corner of it, and many held up their hands in hopeless disapproval. The common clay suffered much, and thought that all was over. It had not even the heart to show chickweed on its surface, "*Das Lied ist aus*!" The rose grower and the gardener held on and dug it all over again, with heavy top dressing, . . . it was worse than ever.

But out of that came roses,—"so, and no otherwise."

There then, was an explanation of the inner conflict. All detestable and incomprehensible things began to wear another aspect; they were means by which the common clay was to become roses,—white roses of

sincerity, damask roses of self-sacrifice, precious cloth of gold roses of wealth and sweetness of heart, too rich to know suspicion, and too sweet to hold resentment, a rose so hard to grow but so perfectly satisfying when it really flowers; and "Céleste" the bud of ideals, —and the noble old "Géant des batailles," and stout "Magna Charta," whom we moderns are beginning to forget, and many others. Perhaps there is a "modern side" in virtues as well as in public schools, with its own advantages and its own drawbacks, and here, too, perhaps some of us are entered for the "modern" and some for the "classical" side; but it does not much matter, provided we grow roses in our souls.

Time went on, and on our top terrace of the Janiculum stood a Novice with the same eyes and the same brow as those of the child. The discontent had vanished, the face had set into earnest purpose, but many unsolved problems still pressed their claims to be dealt with, and unspoken questions uttered themselves out of the eyes. There are young, thoughtful faces that appeal unconsciously for answers. They look into older faces and say without uttering a word: "Do you know?" "Do you understand?" "Can you explain?" This may well be at twenty-five. They are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, but also they are not far from the black chasm of discouragement. Other faces at that age are full of assertion and affirmation; it may be well with them,—they will never hang over a chasm, but probably they will never reach a height.

Again help came from the garden. Rooted in the loose limestone the freshly pruned vines stood hideous, twisted, hacked, almost done to death, without a vestige

of beauty or, apparently—a stir of life, stripped of all former growth, with nothing to live upon, and the bare rock to hold to. Yet in those hacked stumps slept the soul of the vine, and a few days hence after rain, it would bound into life.

And out of that came grapes; "so, and no otherwise."

The vine said "surrender yourself to the life, and trust," and after that the Novice saw that the very hacking and hewing contained answers to the problem of life.

After years, in Lebanon, under the Cedars, the face had changed again, though it was still the same. At fifty (this you will recognise as my favourite thesis to an unbelieving world) the face *ought* to make quiet affirmations. Either the questions are answered or it does not matter that they cannot be. The answer to so many questions is only, "wait"; and their victorious solution is "trust." And there is nothing so restful as the faces of "fifty and over" which tell of:

> "Imaginations calm and fair,
> The memory like a cloudless air,
> The conscience like a sea at rest."

But this cannot be had for the asking, nor is it ready made. And it is of no use to ask: "How long will it take?" It must have time to grow. No one can tell how it is done, but it *is* done. The cedar must be long years rooted in the ground, living at a high altitude, weighted by the snows, strained by the winds, dried at the roots at some seasons, and in others half washed down by the floods.

So grows the incorruptible cedar of Lebanon, "so and no otherwise."

"So, and no otherwise" is the record of our various growths; formative influences from without, meeting responsive possibilities from within, and the word of growing life is: "Surrender—co-operate—wait—trust."

1905.

A COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENT.

TAKING THE LAST PLACE.

In Community life the greatest acquirements are virtues—first come the theological, cardinal and moral virtues, and these, in the Society are esteemed above everything else. Then come the lesser virtues, "les petites vertus" of St. Francis of Sales—small but precious and charming things which he likens to wild thyme and other lowly aromatic plants growing at the foot of the Cross. There are likewise arts in Community life, the art of government, for instance, exercised in its degree from the Superior General down to the youngest authority who rules as a subaltern officer over a small squad of fighting units at the Junior School recreation. That is one of the greatest arts, and precisely what it consists in is known to Him alone " by whom Kings reign." There is the art of teaching of which we have heard so much in these last years, that some can scarcely bear to hear any more about it, so great is their confusion of mind already, or their weariness. To others it is "*the profession*,"

a whole world to be explored and brought under. To others it is the stepping stone to apostolic achievements, but all are agreed that it is one of our major arts. There is the art of persuasion which belongs to the perilous spheres of parlour and Retreat House; the art of conversation which has an almost unlimited sphere of influence within the Community and without. Of all our major arts perhaps it is the most precious and the one which we should most earnestly cultivate, for artists in spiritual conversations are treasures in Community, as painters of truths and mysteries, portrait painters of saints, "genre" painters of virtues, animal painters of the antics and frailties of fallen human nature, and so on. So great is its influence that a good spiritual talker is a Community Apostle, and takes rank among our greatest artists. It may be supposed that the major arts belong to the chief works of the Society and to its government, afterwards come the host of minor arts and minor artists, whose works enrich Community life with many charms; not only the minor painters and embroiderers and musicians and singers and verse writers and designers and writers of script or black-letter and illuminators and costumers, but the ingenuous inquirers, the askers of conundrums, the people who intellectually suggest, even if they fall short in expression; the people who make spiritual salmon flies and then pass the rod to their neighbour, and all the brotherhood, Friars minor, though not Franciscans, whose happy minor art is tact.

After greater and lesser virtues, major and minor arts, follow the accomplishments—and here comes the knot of the question, what is a Community accomplish-

ment? By its etymology an accomplishment is that which completes or finishes off or makes perfect. By its older meaning now obsolescent—(for reasons known to the Board of Education and deserving of a Blue Book to themselves)—an accomplishment is "an acquirement special to cultivated or fashionable society." Transferred to the religious enclosure therefore, a Community accomplishment must be an acquirement which distinguishes a finished or perfect religious in Community intercourse, in other words, "an accomplished Religious." It says a great deal to say an "accomplished religious," for it implies the existence of at least *some* notable virtues, at least some discernible arts, and beyond them, some finishing graces which add to the charm of Community life, and deserve the name of accomplishments.

The little characteristic by which the perfect religious comes back to the mind of the Community (apart from the individual) is probably her Community accomplishment, and directly or indirectly the essays will call our attention to many of these, and probably an increased zeal for Community accomplishments will be the result.

There are so many to choose from that it is almost embarrassing, but I have fixed my choice at last on the accomplishment of taking the last place, "the place given to you by the Rule," as someone has called it. It is given to us by the Rule, but to take it perfectly, gracefully, and habitually, is the accomplishment of a finished religious, and requires a great deal more than appears at first sight. To take it

perfectly requires in a sense the four qualities of the glorified body—agility, to get there; subtlety, not to "upset" anyone else on the way; impassibility, to remain there with grace; and clarity, such clarity as is possible to the not-yet glorified, the suffused radiance of happy humility. That is perfection. But we usually begin at the other end, at imperfection,—and these are the rules of how not to do it:

1. Don't say "mine by right" and elbow your way there and hold it by force against all comers as if it were a besieged fort,—the last place is the place that gives way.

2. Don't say that "you are ready to take the last place but you don't like it being given to you," for this gives you away unnecessarily, it means that you want the first place with the appearance of the last; to wear the aigrette of an osprey with the crest of your humility, this is choice.

3. Don't too obviously show a dislike to it by the evidence of a morbid conviction that you are "born, but not made" for it.

4. Don't fly to it with the suddenness of an afterthought, for this lets out the secret that it is the subject of your particular examen.

"These rules are so gross that they must belong to the first week of the Exercises, the furthest point of all from the glorified body, and they are offered with an apology, to beginners in the practice.

Let us seek for something a little less crude for the young proficients of the second week.

Remember that the last place is what the geometri-

cians call a "locus" rather than what the nursery governess calls a "charming spot," that is to say, that the problem is solved by a line and not by a point. All along that line lies the last place, sometimes at its beginning, sometimes at its end, sometimes it forms a circle and the locus is all round it, at a fixed distance from the centre where the light focusses. It is not *always* the last place materially, for in processional order that belongs to the Bishops. The problem is sometimes to find it, and the accomplishment, in looking as if there had not been a problem at all. *There* is the touch stone of the accomplished person, to take it with ease, without the use of elbows to get into it, without the condescension of the person who wears the osprey's crest, without the peevish vexation of the one who does not want it, without the start of the beginner who remembers the particular examen and lays her hand upon her heart.

But ease is born of practice, and only by practice and through many failures can accomplishments be acquired. We shall learn to take the last place in an accomplished manner by taking it so often that we do not think we are taking it at all. But to the *very* beginners who still read in words of one syllable here is a piece of farewell advice, if you are still very awkward at it, practice unseen in the last place but one. Then when you are quite accustomed to that you can go a step further and come in as an emphatic "Amen" at the end of an excellent prayer, to the edification of the Community.

1907

"His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

Wordsworth.

After two stormy sessions and the death of the ill-starred Education Bill, it is only those who are most ardent in the cause who can even bear to hear the subject mentioned; most people are in a state of educational collapse, except a few Nonconformist leaders on the one hand, who are still "breathing forth threatening and slaughter," and on the other those for whom the word has too wide a meaning and too long a life to be expressed in terms of a bill, or measured by sessions of Parliament. For the Church in her eternal youth is ever beginning again, with unwearying interest, while her experience of centuries saves her from perturbation in a crisis as much as from depression when the critical moment has passed.

What the Church knows we believe; the fruit of her experience is our transmitted inheritance, and therefore, in face of the unknown future, big with peril, we are not afraid, for God is with us.

Therefore we can afford to take undiminished interest in the subject that many cannot bear to mention, but at this time of Christmas, when for a moment hostilities are suspended, "toto orbe in pace composito," our concern passes beyond the schoolroom and the class, to a wider region, where the interest ceases to be professional and becomes human, ranging beyond the means to reach the desired end.

Human education in its widest sense, refuses to be guaranteed by competent, qualified teachers, or regulated by Boards, or tested by examination or recorded in percentages. It is a *bringing to be* of something whole and living, out of passive elements and latent forces, and it needs as many conditions to bring it to perfection as the natural process of growth in the plant world. God has set over man many tutors and governors, uncertificated indeed, but supremely efficient, and if man does not lend a willing ear to them, and a heart to their discipline, he may reach distinction as a marvel of academical success, but he is not educated. Wordsworth gives us the clue to this larger education in the lines from "Brougham Castle":

"His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

These in their songs and in their silences first took in hand the child who afterwards:

" . . . . . kept in lofty place
The wisdom which adversity had bred."

These gave him the hearing ear, the seeing eye, the large horizon of solitude and the quiet of mind which must underlie all true greatness of thought and action. There is something wanting in education where a childhood has not had its share of this teaching, and the heat and stress of human life has been around it from the beginning, never leaving it the leisure to be rapt in silence and alone.

These are not *all* the teachers who have their share in fashioning the perfect mind and will, but they are the first and perhaps the last.

It may be that after learning from them in childhood, and going out from them to the university world of larger life and thought in youth, and afterwards trying theories, principles and aspirations on the furnace of action during the years of middle life,—it may be that we return in old age to those early teachers, who, themselves never grow old, and then with quiet mind review the years of varied training, link up and gather together in one, the first and last precious thoughts which are the harvest of a life-time.

Young, vigorous, full-grown life needs room to expand in action, it needs the clash of thought with other minds, it needs conflict and adversity, experience, humiliations and stripes, efforts intense and long sustained even unto weariness—to bring its powers to maturity. These, too, are lessons for life and they are beyond the language of "woods and rills." When the powers are thus brought to maturity, in the fulness of their strength, they need scope that the talents entrusted to each may bring their due return. This is the gift of cities and their burden, but if in other years we have not heard other voices, then, when activity fails, thought has not the quiet provinces of its fatherland to which it can withdraw, and the last years instead of fruition bring a sense of failure and regret.

Not only in the length, but in the breadth of life also a want will be felt. However full of activity when pressing duties crowd in upon us, something beyond is needed to make it perfect, some halls of space and avenues of leisure in the soul, some stately distances of manners, and high porticoes of silence, some long rever-

ent approaches to the interior mansion, where God and His Angels condescend to walk; these are inherited from the early, silent, leisurely years—the woods and rills of the poem.

Could we disentangle the holy and lovely influences that have shaped our deepest thoughts and given us our most beautiful outlooks upon life? A poet of Wordsworth's calm, reflective mind can do so, and it may be, that in the measure that we can understand and utter them, we too are humble poets of the inner life. But in that measure we shall be listeners still, waiting upon voices from afar, that all are not capable of hearing, receiving influences from common things, which transcend their accepted values and significance. In our poet's own words:

> "Listen, ponder, hold them dear,
> For of God, of God they are."

Let their influence then, steal over each power of our soul and every mood of our mind, that they, teachers sent from God, may make a sanctuary silence within us, not voiceless, not without music or meaning, but vibrating to every touch of their Creator and the works of His hands.

O All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord, praise and exalt Him above all for ever! ye heavens, bless the Lord, praise and exalt Him above all for ever,

O all ye waters that are above the heavens,
O ye sun and moon,
O ye stars of heaven,
O every shower and dew,
O all ye spirits of God,

O ye fire and heat,
O ye dew and hoar-frosts,
O ye ice and snow,
O ye nights and days,
O ye light and darkness,
O ye lightning and clouds,
O ye mountains and hills,
O ye things that spring up in the earth,
O ye seas and rivers,
O all ye that move in the waters,
O ye birds of the air,
O ye sons of man,
O ye priests of the Lord,

O ye holy and humble of heart bless the Lord, give thanks to the Lord because He is good and His mercy endureth for ever.

1908.

HIGHWAYS AND BY-WAYS IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

By the highway—we go for the sake of arriving; in the by-way we go for the sake of going. This is a general law, though, as in most human things there are exceptions. It is, however, sufficiently constant as a working rule to enable us to say what kind of travellers we shall meet respectively on highways and in by-ways, and beyond that to gain some ideas of these two roads in the spiritual life.

Highways and by-ways differ, not accidentally, but in essentials, they are not parallel ways, but they cross at right angles to each other. Highways are made, by-ways make themselves. Highways have a history, by-ways have only memories. Highways reach their terminus in a great town, the terminus of a by-way is often nothing at all, the track grows fainter and mysteriously vanishes, like an unanswered question. Highways require attention and keep accounts, by-ways evade attention and having nothing to spend, there *are* no accounts to keep. Highways attain, by-ways attract. Highways suffer blame, by-ways are ignored. Highways dictate, by-ways influence. Highways are open, by-ways are subtle. Highways themselves unaltering, leave the traveller unaltered, they merely convey him to his destination. By-ways themselves unassuming, yet have a power of assumption the stronger for its self-effacement. And in the end, by one of those contradictory effects which seem to be native products of the earth, the highways—the imperious, masterful, commanding, positive highway is

a servant; and the elusive, undetermined, silent, solitary by-way is a master; and by it we go, not because we want to go to some foreseen end, but because we *must* go.

The passengers on highways and by-ways are as diverse as the ways by which they travel. The men of system seek the highway; they want to get *there*, wherever *there* may be. They seek efficient means of transport, rapid, certain, and direct, undistracting, unhesitating. They like the road to be well "graded" —perfectly macadamised. They wish to see where they are going—the guide post at the cross-roads says much to them, every one should be properly informed, properly fitted out, exact to time, but it is above all essential that every one should *get there*.

The most efficient of God's creatures pour along that way, "not many mighty, not many noble are called," but these few elect usually go by the highway, and usually arrive. The great statesmen, the great generals, the founders, the up-builders, the Judges and Governors, either of Church or State, the great Professionals go this way, the great orators, the men of fact, the men of work, the men of action, the prompt, the decided, the practical, the awake, the foresightful, the consistent, and in the humble walks, the reliable, the honest, those who know and do. The huntsman by preference brings his hounds round by the high-road, and the farmer in his gig returns that way from the market; strange, silent, observant, reliable people who know their own business to perfection, theirs are the rights and methods of the highways. But straight

across this track comes another current of travellers, that of the by-ways, who go . . . . because go they must, and it is not evident where they are going.

There pass the inspired people, the seers, poets in contemplation, shepherds and sons of the soil who hide behind irresponsive faces strange gleams of the unseen world, shadows of inarticulate fears and hopes still more unutterable, there pass village children gathering flowers, and gypsies in quest of forbidden things, and crazy, harmless wanderers perhaps wiser than the sane, and all the uncounted seekers after that which can never be known, and lovers of that which always lies beyond. The people of the other world are attracted to the by-ways, where the mysteries call them onward, and the shy nightingales sing, and the stress of life is lifted off, and the ticking of time is still, where it is no longer the chronometer that divides the seconds, but the sun that rules the day, and the moon and stars that govern the night; where life seems larger because of silence and calm, where the soul may be invaded and taken captive unresisting by the powers of the world to come, where the mind learns to rest in the Lord and wait patiently for the heart's desire, where the conviction grows that at long last all things come home to their God, "*Ad Te omnis caro veniet!*"

The saints are there, yes, but the saints, thank God! are everywhere, for every frame of the human mind has been anointed and crowned in the order of Saints. "Thou hast made us to our God a Kingdom and Priests and we shall reign." Kings for the highway, priests and people for the by-way, all true to themselves and

true to God, made to be themselves, and anointed for their heavenly calling.

Made for labour and anointed for rest.
Made for faith and anointed for sight.
Made for battle and anointed for love.

We watched one moment more, and they passed by, a saint of the highway and one of the by-way, and left us wondering. A heavy motor-car went by—50 horse-power, carrying a Prince of the Church. He looked up at the guide-post at the cross-roads, glanced at his watch, glanced at the speedometer, turned a moment westward to the sunset, and set his lips, "*Le repos ailleurs*," he said under his breath, to himself.

The dust of his motor had scarcely settled, when another Prince of the Church crossed the Highway on foot, and followed the by-way at right angles. A rabbit sat up in his path and was not afraid, a little flight of chaffinches followed the beauty of holiness, "Och! och!" said the saint, "take it quietly," and he laughed gently to himself. But out of the West, from the glory of the sunset, the Angels of God looked after him—rapt.

1909

Part II.

PAPERS AND NOTES ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

ON THE SIMPLE LIFE.

You ask me, Philothea, to exchange with you my views on the simple life, and I have no doubt that you allude to the interior life in making this request, for what have you and I to do with the complexities of life outside? A thousand thanks be to God for the same!

To begin with, it seems to me that the simple life is the property of those who are advancing in age, rather than the quality of the young; and this is a consideration not discouraging to the young, but *encouraging* both to young and old; for we can all become old, but we cannot become young. You talk of the simplicity of a little child, believe me, Philothea, it is not a monopoly or even a property of the 20th century child, *it has been relegated to the grandmothers*; at least, until the wheel goes round again in the reaction of the simple life.

The spiritual child, the Novice, does not lead the simple life; the extreme ardour of her pursuit of perfection, her exuberant delight in well-doing; her thirst for instruction so far beyond her capacity for assimilating it; these and other qualities, under an appearance of simplicity conceal a machinery so complex that few even among spiritual mechanics are capable of understanding, and fewer still of appreciating or manipulating it.

In no order of things is adolescence a time of the simple life. The youths and maidens in their intolerable years are intolerable on account of their complexities, in proportion to their complexities; creatures of fancy and day-dreams, spook-haunted, unreasonable, visionary, illuminate; vivid imaginations, fragile intelligences, feeble wills; and this is true in proportion, of the spiritual youth and maiden. When we recommend the simple life to them, Philothea, it is quite useless, for it is not understood. Pray understand me rightly yourself. I did not say that the Aspirants were intolerable, they are among the most delightful of God's creatures, second only to the Professed. But they don't understand about the simple life. They will later on! So give them time.

The Professed ought to know something about it, and taking them as a whole, they do, and we shall understand about it more and more until we come to die,—and that—(although Father Faber calls it a very complex act)—I believe to be the simplest act of all.

But as to the practical aspect of the simple life, what shall we say, Philothea? With St. John of the Cross: "*N'ajoutez pas, mais retranchez.*" With St. Francis of Sales: "I desire very few things: and what I do desire, I desire very slightly": I have scarcely any desires, but if I could be born again, I would have none at all. With M. Arnold's "Second best."

> "Moderate tasks and moderate leisure,
> Quiet living, strict-kept measure
> Both in suffering and in pleasure—
> 'Tis for this thy nature yearns."

"'But so many books thou readest,
But so many schemes thou breedest,
But so many wishes feedest,
That thy poor head almost turns."

"'And (the world's so madly jangled,
Human things so fast entangled)
Nature's wish must now be strangled
For that *best* which she discerns."

"'So it must be! Yet while leading
A strained life, while over-feeding,
Like the rest, his wit with reading,
No small profit that man earns,"

"'Who through all he meets can steer him,
Can reject what cannot clear him,
Cling to what can truly cheer him,
Who each day more surely learns,"

"'That an impulse from the distance
Of his deepest, best existence,
To the words 'Hope, Light, Persistence'
Strongly sets and truly burns."

THE THREE DIMENSIONS.

LENGTH, BREADTH, DEPTH.

Quid? What is the deep man? The man who thinks. The wide man? The man of action (as will be seen). The long man? The man with experience.

Quibus vestibus? That is, the deep man is the contemplative; the wide man is the apostle; and the long man is the ruler; or in the natural order the deep man is the philosopher; the wide man is the man of business; and the long man is the statesman.

Ubi? The deep man lives in the beginnings and ends of things. The wide man, generally in the middle of things. And the long man hitches the three together (and so gets his length by experience and foresight).

Quale? And so it seems that the deep man will be concentrated; the wide man influential; and the long man invaluable. And in company it is our deep friend that will be the most interesting; our wide friend the most agreeable; and our long friend the most useful.

Quomodo? The deep man, it will be found, looks down into the hearts of things or up to the cause of things (according to his position at the moment), and as it sometimes happens, things on a level with his eyes may escape him. It is just these things that the wide

man sees; he looks on the right and left of him taking a wide sweep of the horizon. And the long man looks before him and behind him, for he has eyes in the front and the back of his head, he sees what has gone before and what is likely to come after.

Quando? The deep man as such, (I speak under correction) belongs more especially to the pre-renaissance period, perhaps I should rather say the deep saint belonged to that time; while the wide and all-round saint, to the period after the Renaissance, when the character was more evenly developed; and the long man belongs to all times, for the world could never get on without him.

Cujus? The deep man originates works, ideas, schemes. The broad man carries them out, and the long man consolidates and makes them lasting.

Quid agit? How does the deep man become deep? Obviously by thinking. And the wide man wide? One way is by tact, the tactless man only cuts off from himself, by his misjudged hacks, while the tactful man cements together the weak places in his sphere of influence. The long man becomes long by observation.

Quantum? How deep How wide? How long? The deep man can be as deep as he chooses to make his thoughts, he need never be afraid of reaching the bottom. The wide man as wide as he makes his influence felt,

and that can be as wide as the whole world, not by personal influence, perhaps, but by apostolic prayer, and the long man has the dimension which is the most far-reaching of all, for he can make his work Eternal. We all know how to do that, so I will not begin to instruct you.

Compare, contrast, discuss or develop all or any of the following as maxims for the spiritual life:

1. *Allons au plus pressé.*
2. *Solvitur ambulando.*
3. "The manna gathered yesterday
   Already savours of decay."

I propose to treat them by comparison and contrast. Do they meet closely enough to be compared? Do they part markedly enough to be contrasted? At first sight, no, they seem to be, as they were, thrown together by chance; on second reading the features of each came out. Past, present, and future; present, future and past. Contemplative, active and mixed; active, mixed, contemplative, therefore:

Present,—active,—*allons au plus pressé*;

Future,—mixed,—*solvitur ambulando*;

Past,—contemplative,—

"The manna gathered yesterday
Already savours of decay."

It is a mistake to insist upon making things fit into numbers or shapes, yet these maxims seem to be not unwilling to chime in tune one with the other according to this theme.

1. "*Allons au plus pressè!*" *Allons!* to-day, this minute—*Allons*! that is a rod and a staff, rod to the dreamer, staff to the undecided, guide to the enterprising, rule to the devout, curb to the theorist, moderator to the enthusiast, expression of the instant need of things, formula for the School of the "present moment," epitaph over the tomb of the good and faithful servants who have lived at high pressure and died under it. The maxim results in the elimination of all but the pressing and the urgent and most necessary; its fault is that it eliminates too much, and tends to produce the mere worker; exact, efficient, peremptory, a little contemptuous of all that is not an instant need. Leisure, contemplation, high thoughts which colour life but do not result in immediate action, such things are left out of its busy programme; it saves a situation and reaches a result, but it does not illuminate or glorify, so never a saint, and never a poet, nor a "wizard that charmeth wisely" are found among its followers.

2. In sharp contrast with this, place next, the contemplative maxim that speaks of yesterday. This too has a look of haste, but how far removed from the preoccupied, business-like haste of the good soul of the urgent, instant moment. This is the word of the contemplative; remote, aloof, dropping even the handful of manna gathered yesterday; eager, how eager, but for what? For fresh manna, to-day's portion, but only because it sustains the heavenward march, forgetting the things that are behind. Yesterday has gone, let it go utterly; even the manna, even the sweetness, even the light of yesterday. It did its work, now

its work is done. Faith is so strong, and the hills of eternity so near that all else must drop off, and detachment is the law of life: "touch me not," hold me not, let me be free. The flowers of yesterday are withered, the echoes of yesterday have died, the warfare of yesterday is over, the manna if it is not spent is decaying. Yesterday *is not*, it was a stepping stone, safe for one moment, then engulfed and the floods rolled over it, to-day will follow; it is only the foothold of a moment, God's most excellent "*now*." "*Now*," says the Spirit, "tread firmly a moment, snatch the manna as it falls, taste it, then let go, let all go, God remains."

3. Between these two goes the sober, hopeful, truthful promise "solvitur ambulando"; the maxim of the mixed life, and the verified utterance of all Christian experience. When we have been caught between Pharaoh and his host behind, and the Red Sea before us, what was the answer that came clanging from Heaven to our wail of distress? "Why criest thou to Me?" "Speak to the children of Israel to *go forward*." Yes, into the impossible, into the Red Sea, to be drowned, against all hope and reason. Yes, into the impossible, "*solvitur ambulando*," and in the end the sea *did* open up and everything went through.

Bear with me patient Community, if I say once more that it is beautiful to grow old,—*solvitur ambulando*. We know now that it comes true. In the morning of our religious life we thought that winged steeds would carry us flying to the heights of sanctity. But it was not so. Pegasus put us down very soon, and we thought that all was over. We hid our burning faces

in the sand and felt that "we could no more." In that school of experience the Aspirantship lessons are often learned with face buried in the sand. Perhaps we looked about for a juniper tree, like the prophet, and requested for our soul that we might die, observing that we were no better than our fathers (which was so obvious as scarcely to be worth mentioning!) But some angel of God came by, and roused us, and set us on our feet, and bade us eat the bread of the strong, and we walked in the strength of that food again in the journey of forty days and forty nights. And now at least we know where we are going. We lift up our eyes to the hills and see the opal lights of morning. And across them day by day comes the white flash of the Host, telling us that all is true and all is well.

And then we move on for the day's march, in the file of the climbing mules. Is that what it has come to? Mules with broken harness, no trappings, no bells, no wings, with nothing but the heroic obstinacy of a mule determined to arrive in the end. And we shall arrive. As it has been truly said, "Truth, no matter how beclouded by doubt, becomes, at the touch of the loyal and assenting will, translucent. The effort to obey scatters the shadows. It brings an instant verification. Obedience is the true and final solvent of doubt." It is done in the doing. "*Solvitur ambulando.*"

I heard an expressive comment from afar on all these matters,—the voice of a holy man who speaks broken English,—"de doing of it. . . . A-A-A-H! . . . . *de doing of it*!"

ON SUSTAINING MENTAL ACTIVITY.

This is supposing :

1. That mental activity is not yet a formed habit, and cannot sustain itself. (Still in education.)

2. That one has recognised the absolute duty of it, and seen that whatever the resources, one may not bury one's talent in the earth . . . .

3. That some first efforts have been made. (This is on sustaining mental activity, not arousing it.)

It is a case for the *will*, a series of interesting subjects from without will not supply; as soon as their pressure is off they will drop. The will can only be assisted from outside, e.g., by those to whom we are responsible.

HINTS :

1. Make a plan with forethought and advice (not ask for it to be made, or even suggested to one).

Make it *reasonable*, not what would take a high degree of power or a strong habit already formed.

Make it *easy* rather than hard at first, to keep well within the possible.

Make it something *complete* that can be finished up to a given point.

One book in a foreign language to read and note.

One elementary manual of science.

One small period of history.

One biography to read and make notes of.

Choose things of rather general interest, as one may be likely to hear allusions to them.

2. Fix a definite time in which to finish it.

3. Write that down, and write down also on the same paper that "Where there is a will there is a way" (to stimulate myself and silence the protests of the mind when recalcitrant).

4. Give an account by journal or note as often as one has determined to do so, do not miss *one* interval.

5. Make some plan for binding oneself to look beyond the book for information on the subject.

For instance, use the means the Society gives us as helps—Feasts, etc. Any Superior would be delighted to receive a note book of such results, e.g., letter in a foreign language embodying one's results. "What I have learned of botany outside my manual." "What I have found out from side sources, conversations, readings aloud, concerning any period of history or any biography." "An attempt at a review of my book in my *best* English.

1. All this is self-training—we can do it—*we* only can do it.

2. The inconstancy of our wills is the chief difficulty.

3. Beware of the first "I can't," "What is the use?" "Not to-day."

RESPONSIBILITY.

We mean by responsibility the condition of being bound to answer or to give an account either of oneself and one's actions, or for the actions of others, or for something entrusted to us. It implies on the one hand there has been in some way a trust made over to a person, and on the other that this person has to give an account of it to some authority.

Our responsibilities are general and particular.

General, as human beings, for our free will, and our actions; we *may* not act unreasonably and lawlessly.

As Christians, for all that is entrusted to us of the stewardship of grace.

As Religious, for the obligations we have taken on ourselves.

For the first and second we are responsible to God, for the third to the Church and the Society also.

Particular. There are responsibilities that belong to certain people according to their charges and duties. Legislators, leaders, representatives, have their special duties, we have ours, according to our special duties and employments, all in that, which, by a pretty figure of speech we call our "province."

If we can give a reasonable answer to the question "Why did you do it?" we have acted responsibly.

Responsibility may be taken in three ways, two wrong and one right way.

1. It may be *declined* through thoughtlessness, as by children and the young.

Or through sloth, "A fastidious disgust for virtuous exertion," when people won't take it on themselves to act. Thus they sacrifice all the gravity and strength, the sort of manliness that comes with the exercise of responsibility.

Or through fear. They try to shift it on to someone else, or to relieve themselves from responsibility by not exercising a charge that they are called to, thus not governing when they are bound to govern, not teaching when bound to teach, not enlightening, forming, correcting. This attempt to shift responsibility, and escape from it, is in reality to exchange a responsibility that is bearable for one that is unbearable—a much heavier one, as a sovereign who lets the reins of government slide has a much heavier account to render than one that governed to the best of his ability, though he may have made grave mistakes. To take it half and half, to hesitate about it, only makes it harder. To take less than we ought is cowardice.

How far is one responsible, and how far ought one to take on oneself responsibility?

According to the condition of one's trust, one's capacity and character, to the circumstances, the consequences, as far as one can reasonably foresee them.

2. Responsibility may be *exaggerated*, through over-anxiety, going beyond one's province.

Or through self-importance and fussiness, as the fly on the coach.

Or through want of trust in God. Over anxious people take on themselves more than they need, not content to be their brother's keeper, they want to be

everything, and more than everything to him.

3. It may be rightly taken.

Remembering—that it always remains to the person in charge, however they may consult; that the authority is *there* and carries the last responsibility with it; the cook in the kitchen, the doctor for advice, the commander-in-chief for the campaign.

For us, obedience takes off responsibility, we are responsible only for the execution, as a nurse to carry out the doctor's orders, a chemist to make up his prescription.

The only reasonable thing to do is to face it, and do what one can, the right care is the care God takes of us, which, as St. Francis of Sales says, "in its highest activity has still no emotion."

In our life we must always trust God for the grace *proportional* to the mission ordinary or extraordinary; within or without our capacity.

We must remember that the obedience that almost *compels* miracles, the brilliant successes of the spiritual life, come to obedience of *judgment*, even obedience of will does not give spring enough for such leaps, but the obedience that is smitten with the love of the impossible is the sort that carries us through.

January, 1902.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ROMAN BASILICAS AND GOTHIC CATHEDRALS.

It has been said that the Roman Basilica expresses the condescension of God towards man, and the Gothic Cathedral the aspiration of man towards God.

Supposing this to be true, transfer the idea to the spiritual structure of Religious Orders, (or Societies) and say:

Which Religious Orders belong to the type you have chosen.

On what do you ground your claim to these Religious Orders.

What Saints had Basilican, or Cathedral Souls.

Give, in not more than fifteen lines, the characteristics of a Basilican or Cathedral soul (whichever you have chosen).

Characteristics of the Basilican soul.

Taking for granted the theses,—the Roman Basilica the type of God's condescension to man; the architectural characteristics of the style are briefly, breadth, strength, unity, simplicity and light.

Such qualities will show forth the apostolic soul; and are calculated to draw even the simple and unlearned into the Basilica.

Historically, the style is a universal one, as to time. The first Christian Basilicas were modifications of the great Roman temples, if not actually, those temples themselves; this adaptability of the style to East and West, North and South, again well shows forth the apostolic soul. As religion came from the East (Pales-

tine), and took root in the ancient West (Rome), and thence spread North and West over the entire world, so the Apostolic soul seeking its mission at the feet of Peter, seeks to spread the influence of Rome even to the ends of the earth.

What we have said with regard to the Basilican soul may be applied to the Religious Orders. The special attributes of simplicity, unity of design, clearness, breadth, openness, moral adaptability. Two facts relating to the Basilica are significant : light floods the building, and the priest says Mass at an altar facing the people.

Typical Saints : (Basilican) St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Gregory I., St. Teresa, St. Ignatius, St. F. Xavier, St. Francis of Sales.

Characteristics of the Cathedral soul.

A Gothic Cathedral is of all buildings the most unworldly, in its whole purpose and conception, solely God's service by prayer and praise. It speaks of God and invites all to holiness, whether seen casually by a passing wayfarer, or entered, when the glorious chants resound beneath its vaults, or when its calm silence seems to hush all the passions into calm, and the echoes breathe peace to the weary and troubled. Such is the influence of a Cathedral soul, penetrated as it is with an atmosphere of seriousness and serenity within, living a life hidden with Christ in God. She tends heavenward, like the lofty arches and steeple of a Gothic fane ; she combines strength with elevation, is a monument of patient love by fidelity and perfection of detail, and teaches the lesson that no sacrifice is too

great for God's glory. Like the beauty of the crypt, humility characterises the Cathedral soul, and obedience is typified by the buttresses on which it leans; while its whole object and aim is prayer and adoration.

Religious Orders. I begin by taking Gothic architecture in its least controverted symbolism; the reaching out of the human soul to God; the lifting up of man's spirit to Heaven; the reproduction, as far as in him lies, of that life of eternal contemplation, which is the destiny and last end of every human soul.

This act of man is his highest and best, and it is this which he tried to work into the temples of God, built during the ages of faith, when all that was best in thought and possession was lavishly dedicated to God; the church was then the centre of every city, of every town; the spire of the solitary abbey church dominated the open space of the country. God's house must be above all; more beautiful than all. This seems to be the most perfect symbolism of the life of man's soul. The contemplative life, begun in the Church, in individuals, from the very beginning, was later on the only form of religious life known. Those Gothic aisles were raised to echo back the chant of the Office day and night; the vaulted roofs, to be filled with the fragrance of incense. God's worship in one form or another, never to be absent; every detail beautifully finished because God's eye will rest upon it, often the more beautiful the more hidden.

This is the dominant idea of contemplative Orders. Carthusians, Benedictines, Cistercians, Carmelites, and it was from them that Gothic architecture received its highest development.

Gothic Saints. There seems to be a strange resemblance between the Gothic Saints of the Contemplative Orders and Gothic architecture.

In a Gothic Cathedral, for the few beautifully finished ornaments that meet the eye, we know that there are hidden away countless others, of equal beauty and perfection. So with Gothic Saints. For the one St. Aidan or St. Cuthbert, or St. Hilda that we know, the monasteries were peopled with saintly Saxon monks and nuns. If St. Bernard stands out in the 12th century, do we not see in the background visions of a train of Cistercians, whose names we do not know, but whose holiness made the monastery of Citeaux famous, and does not the second feast of All Saints, kept by the Benedictines to commemorate the 1,100 Saints of their Order, bear witness to the same truth?

To put it very shortly: the Roman Basilica may be said to be characterised by width, strength, light; and the Gothic Cathedral by height, grace and shadows.

August, 1906.

FOUR CLASSES OF SOULS.

"Should you prefer that it might be truly said of you, that you had a soul of iron, of ivory, of crystal, or of fire?" What qualities does it seem to you that each would stand for, and what Saint would you take to have such a soul?

A soul of iron suggests to me the loud, melodious clang of a spirit crying out to God, now "*de profundis*," now "*in excelsis*," a strong soul, made for suffering and spiritual greatness, destined to pass through tribulation, necessities, distresses, stripes, prisons and labours, in the spirit, if not in the flesh, but probably both the spirit and the flesh will be tried with the great company of acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation, as iron is fashioned in the fire and on the anvil. I should take St. John of the Cross to be a soul of iron.

A soul of ivory. One which has great resources of mind and heart. One of the things which appeals to me particularly in ivory is the life-history which has gone before, when the great tusk was carried through the free range of forest and jungle in the joy of life, and exuberance of strength. After which came death, a great renunciation, a great surrender of the soul, and then a new existence "in chastity, in knowledge, in longsuffering, in sweetness." Ivory lends itself with indifference to many services. Even an ivory ball is full of meaning, it shows its own individual grain, it has kept such elasticity and rebounds with such a ringing note, it cannot forget that it was once a living thing. But an ivory statue of Our Lady, "*Turris eburnea*" expresses best what I think of ivory, and

most of all if it be one of those works of art, no longer made, called *chryselephantine*, or ivory inlaid with gold.

I take St. Gertrude to be a soul of ivory, inlaid by God with gold; a *chryselephantine* Saint.

A soul of crystal. One that is true to itself throughout, transparently true, very definite in its form, and unclouded by human respect; admitting great varieties in colour; its characteristics are truth, joy, light, and clearness of vision.

I take St. Augustine as typical of a crystal soul, the light of God goes right through him, and in his transparency of soul he hides nothing, but passes it on to us, not even refracted, in his revelation of himself.

A soul of fire. Father Faber writes that

> "... the old Hebrew times, they were ages of fire,
> When fainting souls fed on each dim, figured word,
> And God called men He loved most, the men of desire."

This harmonises with the conclusion to which I have come after examining several souls of fire. If one dares to mention an Apostle, (but let us not discuss them) St. Paul and St. John were souls of fire, likewise St. Jerome, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ignatius. The characteristic quality in all seems to be that they were insatiable, like "*consuming fire.*" Their desires of the glory of God, the salvation of souls, the perfection of the elect, of labours, of vigils, of fastings, and especially of the love of God, were never satisfied.

I take Mother Duchesne to stand for a soul of fire by this particular quality of being insatiable.

After much deliberation, I would choose to be a soul of ivory.

Christmas, 1910.

TWO LETTERS OF ADVICE.

A's natural motto is "*Requiescamus in pace.*"

B's natural motto is "*Le repos ailleurs.*"

They write to you on the same day to ask for a letter of good advice concerning their mental, moral and spiritual development.

Write one or both of these letters.

Letter to A.

My dear A.—

There is nothing which is, at the same time, so easy and so hard as the road by which you have to walk, in order to become a spiritual person. It is easy, because it is very straight, haunted by no shadows of doubt or perplexities; hard, because it calls for self-contradiction and self-renunciation every hour of every day of your life. Do you not want to do anything? Do it. That is the whole of your rule of life, it is the way of the Cross and as straight as a roman road.

Your faults of character are those which drag, and not those which jar. You may be thankful for it, because there is little danger for others, they will only say "poor A," (which is not pleasant) and pass on. On the other hand, your power of doing good is in exact proportion to the price which you are willing to lay down. You have to give your life. That is all.

Since you speak of mental, moral and spiritual development, let me say a word on each.

Mentally—drive yourself to produce, even if you steadily destroy what you have produced. It will strengthen your mind by obliging you to think. Reading

alone will not do this. Likewise oblige yourself to speak. This will force you, if you persevere, to reach some degree of precision in thought and flexibility of mind.

Morally. The law for you is "now or never." Each opportunity is a unique chance, it will never return again. Rally your will to it, again and again. You have three things to count on,—your will power, which will grow daily; the motive which is the mainspring of your life,—you know what it is; the grace of God, to be had for the asking, and always *now*.

Spiritually. There is the particular examen. You must be a slave to it. "A little persevered in" whatever it may be. Then, if you have the courage to undertake it for a month at a time without failing, a schedule of daily duties, and written points of meditation.

And that meditation will be the very soul of your great endeavour. Let it be often on the Cross. The "Royal Road" in the Imitation is always ready, if you have not anything else at hand, and you will find out how true it is that "in the Cross is strength of mind, in the Cross is joy of spirit," and all the other things you want.

I am, etc, etc.,

J.S.

Letter to B.

My dear B.—

A stirring character, such as yours, will be felt either for good or otherwise wherever you go, and since you are B, it must be for good. But the cost of

that good, and its quality, have to be considered. You are resolved to be a spiritual person, and you will find that in order to be one, you must pay a great price. You might speak with tongues of men and angels, and yet yourself be a cast-away, not from the body of the elect, but from the minor circle of the spiritual and heavenly-minded. Cast away to activity and troubling about many things.

To keep your splendid energy in full play and yet not lose heavenly-mindedness, this is the problem of your life. As its solution I will make suggestions under the headings you propose.

(1) *Mental.* Read only the best, and read slowly. Read permanent things. Avoid newspapers as much as you can, and in proportion to your eagerness to read them, if your duties give you any access to them. In the words of the Imitation, "Let curiosities alone."

(2) *Spiritual.* Let contrition be the basis of your spiritual life, to keep you sane and stable in spiritual things. And let the presence of God be the life of it. Let spiritual reading be not of curious things, but of permanent and classical spiritual books. Let vocal prayer be slowly said, and mental prayer be as unspeculative as possible.

(3) *Moral.* Do as little as you can yourself and let your success be by perfecting others, to make yourself unnecessary.

In general. Watch against the dangers which are special to your temperament :—

Hurry, and the feeling of hurry.

Negligence of little and hidden things.

Criticism and contempt for others.

Talking of work, and in particular of your own. Welcome, as marks of progress :

Growing appreciation of the worth of others, and the power of admiring.

Power of keeping silence.

Patience with the delays and checks which are God's rivets, holding your spiritual machine together and keeping it from flying into bits.

I am, dear B.,

Yours affectionately in C.J.M.,

J. Stuart, rSCJ.

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